

JOHN R. McCLOSKEY: SEVENTY YEARS OF GRIPING NEWSPAPERS, POLITICS, GOVERNMENT

Interviewee: John R. McCloskey

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Description

John R. “Jack” McCloskey, a native of Goldfield, Nevada, was born in 1911. His parents had left Leadville, Colorado, in the wake of labor violence there. McCloskey attended local schools in Goldfield and Tonopah, always interested in the newspaper business.

As a teenager, John McCloskey swept out the office of the Tonopah Bonanza, and, as he recounts, listened to the fascinating conversations that took place there—local and national politics, local business, the printing trade, and simple gossip. The inquisitive and attentive youngster became an alert and industrious man. McCloskey worked at printing and writing for the pioneer newspaperman, W. W. Booth, while he learned ethical precepts of the trade from his own mentor, Matt Farrell.

When Hawthorne began to come into prominence as the site for a new Naval Ammunition Depot, Booth took his newspaper business there. McCloskey and a friend, John “Scoop” Connors, worked for Booth and then succeeded him. McCloskey and Connors worked for the Hawthorne News, and finally founded their own paper, the Mineral County Independent. Years of struggle brought both papers, as the Mineral County Independent-News, into the hands of McCloskey and Connors, and eventually McCloskey became the sole owner. He has retained the Mineral County Independent-News for nearly fifty years and has made the paper a voice for the people of the small-population counties of Nevada.

McCloskey has also made the Mineral County Independent-News into a lively, interesting, and occasionally controversial vehicle of thought and opinion, especially on local and national political and military affairs. The newspaper’s location near the important ammunition depot over the years brought military and political figures to Hawthorne, and gave the little town on Walker Lake somewhat of a national focus.

Because he has a central position in the state, and owing to the nature of the news business itself, Jack McCloskey has become one of Nevada’s authoritative figures. He is regularly consulted by all sorts of political and business leaders, seeking advice on topics of special concern, particularly on election campaigns or on the history of the Nevada judicial system. He has an unparalleled memory for people, dates, and issues relating to these subjects, stretching over the seventy years of his memoir. This deep knowledge inevitably creates opinions, and McCloskey’s beliefs are deeply held.

McCloskey has watched—and promoted—the growth of Hawthorne, and not merely as a small city, since he arrived there as a twenty-year-old newsman. His views of the fluctuations in the fortunes of the ammunition depot are

(Continued on next page.)

Description (continued)

well-founded and pithily expressed. The vagaries of American foreign policy are visible at Hawthorne in microcosm, and Jack McCloskey has witnessed them all.

McCloskey is also a source of Nevada's journalism history. As one of the longest-practicing newspapermen in the state, he has known almost every reporter, publisher, or printer of any significance over a period of more than seventy years. He is the repository of hundreds of their stories, adventures, and probably their secrets (but he is too discreet to tell secrets).

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SEVENTY YEARS OF GRIPING

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NEWSPAPERS, POLITICS, GOVERNMENT**

An Oral History Conducted by Mary Ellen Glass

University of Nevada Oral History Program

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PREFACE TO THE DIGITAL EDITION

Established in 1964, the University of Nevada Oral History Program (UNOHP) explores the remembered past through rigorous oral history interviewing, creating a record for present and future researchers. The program's collection of primary source oral histories is an important body of information about significant events, people, places, and activities in twentieth and twenty-first century Nevada and the West.

The UNOHP wishes to make the information in its oral histories accessible to a broad range of patrons. To achieve this goal, its transcripts must speak with an intelligible voice. However, no type font contains symbols for physical gestures and vocal modulations which are integral parts of verbal communication. When human speech is represented in print, stripped of these signals, the result can be a morass of seemingly tangled syntax and incomplete sentences—totally verbatim transcripts sometimes verge on incoherence. Therefore, this transcript has been lightly edited.

While taking great pains not to alter meaning in any way, the editor may have removed false starts, redundancies, and the “uhs,” “ahs,” and other noises with which speech is often liberally sprinkled; compressed some passages which, in unaltered form, misrepresent the chronicler's meaning; and relocated some material to place information in its intended context. Laughter is represented with [laughter] at the end of a sentence in which it occurs, and ellipses are used to indicate that a statement has been interrupted or is incomplete...or that there is a pause for dramatic effect.

As with all of our oral histories, while we can vouch for the authenticity of the interviews in the UNOHP collection, we advise readers to keep in mind that these are remembered pasts, and we do not claim that the recollections are entirely free of error. We can state, however, that the transcripts accurately reflect the oral history recordings on which they were based. Accordingly, each transcript should be approached with the

same prudence that the intelligent reader exercises when consulting government records, newspaper accounts, diaries, and other sources of historical information. All statements made here constitute the remembrance or opinions of the individuals who were interviewed, and not the opinions of the UNOHP.

In order to standardize the design of all UNOHP transcripts for the online database, most have been reformatted, a process that was completed in 2012. This document may therefore differ in appearance and pagination from earlier printed versions. Rather than compile entirely new indexes for each volume, the UNOHP has made each transcript fully searchable electronically. If a previous version of this volume existed, its original index has been appended to this document for reference only. A link to the entire catalog can be found online at <http://oralhistory.unr.edu/>.

For more information on the UNOHP or any of its publications, please contact the University of Nevada Oral History Program at Mail Stop 0324, University of Nevada, Reno, NV, 89557-0324 or by calling 775/784-6932.

Alicia Barber
Director, UNOHP
July 2012

INTRODUCTION

John R. McCloskey is a native of Goldfield, Nevada, born in 1911. His parents had left Leadville, Colorado in the wake of labor violence there. McCloskey attended local schools in Goldfield and Tonopah, always interested in the newspaper business.

As a teenager, John McCloskey swept out the office of the *Tonopah Bonanza*, and as he recounts, listened to the fascinating conversations that took place there—local and national politics, local business, the printing trade, and simple gossip. The inquisitive and attentive youngster became an alert and industrious man. McCloskey worked at printing and writing for the pioneer newspaperman, W.W. Booth, while he learned ethical precepts of the trade from his own mentor, Matt Farrell.

When Hawthorne began to come into prominence as the site for a new Naval Ammunition Depot, Booth took his newspaper business there. McCloskey and a friend, John “Scoop” Connors, worked for Booth and then succeeded him. McCloskey and Connors worked for the *Hawthorne*

News, and finally founded their own paper, the *Mineral County Independent*. Years of struggle brought both papers, as the *Mineral County Independent-News* into the hands of McCloskey and Connors, and eventually, McCloskey became the sole owner. He has retained the *Mineral County Independent-News* for nearly fifty years, and has made the paper a voice for the people of the small-population counties of Nevada

McCloskey has also made the *Mineral County Independent News* into a lively, interesting, occasionally controversial vehicle of thought and opinion especially on local and national political and military affairs. The newspaper’s location near the important Ammunition Depot over the years brought military and political figures to Hawthorne, and gave the little town on Walker Lake somewhat of a national focus.

Because he has a central position in the state, and owing to the nature of the news business itself, “Jack” McCloskey has become one of Nevada’s authoritative figures. He is regularly consulted by all sorts of political

and business leaders, seeking advice on topics of special concern, particularly on election campaigns or on the history of the Nevada judicial system. He has an unparalleled memory for people, dates, issues of these subjects, stretching over the seventy years of his memoir. This deep knowledge inevitably creates opinions, and McCloskey's beliefs are deeply held. One may ask the opinions of this small-county newspaper publisher, but one should also be prepared to hear the invariably straightforward response. His chosen title for this oral history, however, is mostly tongue-in-cheek.

McCloskey is neither narrow nor unobservant. He has watched—and promoted—the growth of Hawthorne, and not merely as a small city, since he arrived there as a twenty-year-old newsman. His views of the fluctuations in the fortunes of the Ammunition Depot are well-founded and pithily expressed. The vagaries of American foreign policy are visible at Hawthorne in microcosm, and Jack McCloskey has witnessed them all. The politicians or military leaders who visit Hawthorne seeking advice on the conduct of a campaign inevitably leave there more knowledgeable than when they arrived, owing to the thorough study done by a country editor.

McCloskey is also a source of Nevada's journalism history. As one of the longest-practicing newspapermen in the state, he has known almost every reporter, publisher, or printer of any significance over a period of more than seventy years. He is the repository of hundreds of their stories, adventures, and probably their secrets (but he is too discreet to tell secrets).

When invited to participate in the Oral History Program, Mr. McCloskey accepted readily. He was a cooperative, humorous, fascinating chronicler of his life experience

for eleven half-day taping sessions, all held at the office of the *Mineral County Independent-News* in Hawthorne, between January, 1976 and July, 1977. Mr. McCloskey's review of his memoir resulted in the excision of some material that he considered extraneous, but no significant changes in language. The oral history is to be released for research in January, 1983.

The Oral History Program of the University of Nevada, Reno Library preserves the past and the present for future research by tape recording the memoirs of people who have been important participants and observers of the development of Nevada and the West. Resulting transcripts are deposited in the University Libraries at Reno and Las Vegas. John R. McCloskey has generously donated his literary rights in his oral history to the University of Nevada, and has designated the volume as open for research after January, 1983.

Mary Ellen Glass
University of Nevada-Reno
1982

MY EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

Well, I was born in Goldfield, Nevada, September 19, 1911. My parents had come from Colorado, where the three oldest children in our family were born. And from my understanding from my mother and father both, the sudden move from Colorado to Goldfield was prompted by economic conditions, namely my dad being out of work, and probably indefinitely out of work because of the labor strife in the state of Colorado. He was very active in the Western Federation of Miners and a member of the Socialist party, I learned in later years, which is somewhat in contrast to my being the first Republican member of the McCloskey family.

However, one must recall the conditions as they existed in the mining camps, not only in Colorado but all Western states of those days, to probably determine the frame of mind and the decision of people to associate with organizations or groups that probably offered them the most in the way of gaining a little better life. From all I've been able to read and discuss, the Western Federation of Miners was a valid, substantial labor organization,

although not too strong. I'm not qualified to give the whole history of that nor can I tell you very much about the big labor strike in Goldfield in 1907 because I wasn't born until 1911. [laughter]

However, I rely upon more than slanted history, that which is slanted both in favor of the mining companies and also in favor of the working men, because in between came the IWW's—known as the Wobblies—and that was the Industrial Workers of the World or something like that—and my father told me many times they thought they could have reached a good settlement with the mine owners in Goldfield had they been able to negotiate between the mine owners and the Western Federation of Miners alone, but with the influx of the IWW element, that only chaos resulted. And, in many ways, I think as history will show, permanent damage was done to the camp, and the economy of the community, and to the individuals at the time. That briefly is my knowledge of the switch of the McCloskey family from Colorado to Goldfield.

My father had worked in the mines in Colorado starting at the age of fourteen. He worked briefly until the labor difficulty put him out again, and thereafter he was in the saloon business in Goldfield owning an interest in the Hermitage saloon and, at one time, a small interest in the Goldfield Hotel and Bar. The advent of Prohibition ended that business, and that's when we moved to Tonopah in 1919.

However, before making that move to Tonopah, I'd like to just relate a few things of the early days in Goldfield, as strictly from memory.

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES IN GOLDFIELD

One of my first remembrances of Goldfield, and I don't know at what age a child is supposed to develop a memory and I doubt if any of the college professors or head shrinkers can pinpoint it with exactness, but I do recall as a very small child when our family was living in what we called the "Gulch" in Goldfield—I believe it was at the far end of Euclid Street—that there was a very heavy flood. Now bear in mind I was born in 1911, and the big flood that they refer to was in 1913. Some people say that a child could not remember things that happened when he was two years of age. This might have been a different flood than the big one they speak of, but I vividly recall my mother grabbin' us kids, putting us on the kitchen table. She was crying, the neighbor was with her—and it wasn't panic—but I don't know of any one group in any one room that was so frightened 'n scared in their life. And that *was* my first of anything that I can remember to an earliest age in Goldfield, was a flood of some kind. Whether it was the big one or not, I cannot say with exactness.

SCHOOL DAYS

My other specific memories of Goldfield, starting school there in the kindergarten. I think it was the first day of school I got in a fight with Pete Walters—Frank Walters—but now known as Pete Walters a prominent resident of Reno, real estate man, active in community projects in Reno. Another one that I recall entering kindergarten with me in Goldfield was Jack Dolan, now a retired schoolteacher and principal in Winnemucca where he taught for many years and continued his residence there upon retirement. And while in Goldfield I went through the kindergarten, first, second grade, and approximately three weeks into the third grade.

My teacher in the first grade was a Mrs. Morrison, and we feared her greatly because it was either her husband or a brother-in-law who was the constable of the town, and we just had a natural fear of policemen. I'm sure it must have been a brother-in-law because in those days a married woman teaching in the schools was the exception and not the rule.

My second grade teacher was a Miss Blevins, who later married one of the "Falvey boys," as they were called; they were railroaders on the Tonopah and Goldfield railroad. And in later years after her retirement, she lived in Reno, and as I recall was the house mother for one of the sorority houses, and I cannot name it right off.

It was while in Miss Blevin's room that we had to learn to knit—"knit one and purl two," or however she said, I don't know—but we actually took time to learn to knit little patches that were made into blankets for the boys overseas in World War I; that was an enjoyable task. But the nuisance factor of the war as I recall, we had to wear masks to school

every day. They were kind of a linen gauze affair that would not keep out a germ of any kind, I don't believe, but yet our mothers had to make them. If they could not afford to buy them, the stores had them on sale. And you'd take that little mask, place it across your nose like a pair of spectacles—the templets (we had put a little strap over each ear)—it was a loop strap, and we ran around looking silly as hell and being equally much the same! [Laughter] My second great experience was learning how to wear a mask among other things, along with knitting.

In the third grade, those first few weeks, my teacher was (later to become a sister-in-law of Miss Blevins) Mamie Falvey, later known in educational circles in Nevada for many years.

I do remember this: that they had us reading and writing almost before we knew it, and we were into the basics—the reading, writing and arithmetic. They were teaching us to add and to multiply. I'm not going to try to pinpoint the grade—and geography as we called it—because I moved from Goldfield to Tonopah in the third grade, leaving Mamie Falvey's class and going into third grade in Tonopah which was enemy territory by any standards in those days.

I had the advantage of having a wonderful teacher, Ellen Sheerin, of the large Sheerin family in Tonopah. (one of her brothers is Chris Sheerin, the retired editor-publisher of the *Elko Daily Free Press*.) We were using some little different method—we had just started in third grade on short division, as I recall—and Miss Sheerin's system was a little different than Miss Falvey's, and that put me behind for a couple weeks. But she was so kind, so understanding, that she asked me to stay in a couple recesses, and then asked me to stay after school one time; I thought I was

being punished and I wasn't. In those three or four short lessons, she had gotten through to me that system she had on short division, what the other pupils already seemed to be sailing through, and from then on things went smoothly. I was never a brilliant student, honor roll type and all. Some things came hard—but not only for me, but even for some of the better students—as English, as we called it then. (Incidentally, I understand it can no longer be called English in some schools; it's "grammar." And the sad part is that I see so little grammar any more—correct, proper grammar [chuckle]. I think they misnamed it; they should call it "language," instead of "grammar.") But from there on, I had no great difficulty.

I was not held back any time from passing grades—which was a common thing in those days and was not any stigma. I know the old corny expression some of my best friends... "well, some of my best friends [chuckle] *have* been held back. Caught up with a couple of very good friends; they didn't get promoted that year, so we moved on up and caught up with them. And today they could buy and sell quite a few schools in the state of Nevada. It wasn't all that bad, but the teachers—and it was usually not that they were slow and didn't get it—it was just that they'd goof off a little bit. And in those days, the teacher had quite a bit of authority. She could promote you or not promote you—which today would be a sociological crisis or something, because I do know that in many of our schools today, they do not "hold back" any more; they "retain" them. In order to retain, they have to obtain permission of the principal. The principal must consult the counselor, and if the counselor at the local school level cannot handle the situation, he calls in a head shrinker from Reno. (A specific case

is going through my mind right now. The damndest waste of time and money because in this particular case—I'm digressing now understand—after two or three counselors they decided he should see a doctor, and the doctor put him on pills, told [the parents to give] the boy his medication, but that's another story, as I say.) Now I want to get back into why maybe we were so fortunate in those days that society and education hadn't advanced to the exotic stage that it has today, because in the mining camp where you were fortunate to get through high school (and so many didn't, largely because of economic conditions; they needed to go to work) and when you did get out of high school—with the exception of a very few who could afford it—no one was going on to college. And those teachers seemed to sense it, and I can truthfully say that from the first grade right on through, I had, by my standards and evaluation, [what] would be excellent teachers, from Miss Sheerin and on in, I think.

The fourth grade, it was Miss McHan, later taught in Elko. Fifth grade, we had two or three substitute teachers come in. When they would come to these camps, the teachers would be disillusioned and leave rapidly. And fortunately, they got out instead of having a miserable year, and then some of the local women, who were former teachers became married, would come in as substitute teachers. Two or three like that. But particularly in the seventh and eighth grade, which was somewhat departmentalized, not a junior high school in the seventh and eighth.

We had the two old-timers there, the grand old ladies from the Nevada school system, Anna Bradley and Helene Slavin. And with them were two young men, Walter V. Long and V. F. Victor. Walter Long a few years later went to Las Vegas and retired as one of the school principals and is there retired now. Victor went back to Utah for a brief period,

then Las Vegas; I think he retired in Las Vegas. Anna Bradley stayed until she dropped in her tracks. She taught three generations of many families in the Tonopah school system. Helene Slavin likewise started her teaching career in Colorado, followed the Colorado miners to Tonopah as a young lady, and after retiring I think she was in the seventy-five dollar a month bracket; they might have finally raised it to a hundred and twenty-five a month. Even in her later years of retirement, why, she taught for a time at Dominican College in California.

But they seemed to have such an uncanny knack for speeding up, or making the smartest students do a little more work, and takin' some of us slower ones, and—through a mental and physical process—they made us learn arithmetic, English (which was always a stickler), even spelling; they were sticklers on spelling. And when I say the "physical process," they were not averse to whackin' you. Anna Bradley once told me in later years, she said, "The only boys I never whacked at least once were such damn sissies, that," she says, "I was afraid they were the ones I might—cause a psychological scar on!" [Laughter] Oh yes, they'd hit ya across the fanny with a ruler. We wore pompadour hair in those days and grease on it, and she'd go back about twice and pull it forward, and come down and give a whack across the cheeks—which, as I say, today would just, well, causing not just a malpractice suit on the part of the teacher, there'd be a complete board meeting and the like of it, and "Oh, never do it!" I think we were big enough to take a whackin'; we were in fist fights all the time anyhow, an' that was the teacher's little slap, an' look, it really didn't hurt that much. It hurt our pride a lot more 'n it ever hurt the chin or the cheeks. And realizing that that was another era and all, but I still don't think it was all that bad.

We had a foundation when we went into high school—I've told the story many times—and that's why I have that diploma [gesture] on the wall, and it is a diploma in the eighth grade in Tonopah which permitted me to go into high school. And that was required, and they would hold back a student who couldn't make it in the eighth grade. He—very seldom but once in a while even a girl, but very seldom, usually the boys—was held back for one year. Well, after two years in the eighth grade if they couldn't hack it, they just suggested they drop out and go to work, which was sound advice, because there was no foundation going into that high school in those days, and once in there, why, we seemed to move along, and we had some very fine teachers at high school. And I think some of the proof of it is that there was so many of us out of Tonopah [who] never had the opportunity to go to college, couldn't afford it, and at least have not become welfare cases, have been able to develop a little business and support ourselves—and there's quite a few of them in Reno. Don't think at this point I should mention the names—maybe later on into something I will—but I just think of so many (not only boys, but girls) and then they would, once in Reno, get a job, not temporarily, but for the time being, tryin' to get a better job. Some of them went to business college. They would take typing courses, get themselves secretarial jobs, and I'm extremely proud of those who came out of Tonopah and did not become subject to charity, or—I'm not just thinkin' of the economical end—but I think can hold their own fairly well, you know, in these so-called intellectual rodeos.

Now that skimmed right on up into there, some of the earlier days in Tonopah. As I say, I had the first day of school in Tonopah after I'd moved from Goldfield, a fist fight at the morning recess, a fist fight after I got back from

lunch, and fist fight at the afternoon recess. lucked out on the first two, and then they decided, I guess, he has to be taught a lesson [laughter]. That afternoon recess they sicced a kid named "Bug Eater"—I never did know his last name—didn't want to—Bug Eater. He hit me so hard he knocked me against the wall of the school building—concrete wall—and I was actually out. I was a third grader, and I was out, because when I came to, the teacher was over me wakin' me up, and wanted to know what had happened and all. And I just couldn't remember. That was the last thing in the world you wanted to do in those days, was remember [chuckle] when you were bein' questioned by the teacher; that was about the only time your memory could fail ya.

From there on, finally, you are accepted, and there was something going on all the time. We had no radio, no television. In fact we didn't even have a crank phonograph, as we called it in Hawthorne later; many of the families didn't. The movie, the old Butler Theater, was going; the swimming pool—when it was open, and that was in the summertime—us in' murky water out of the mine that would never pass the state standards inspection today; and when it was closed, why, we went down to Lambertucci's ponds to swim. But we seemed to find something to do *all* the time in Tonopah, whether it was rustling wood to help the family out, as soon as you could get on sellin' papers—that's what the kids wanted to do. But there was never a real shortage of work or a real shortage of recreation.

When I hear them say there's nothing for the young people to do today, I tell 'em possibly there isn't, because they wouldn't enjoy it or know what it was if they had found something to do—not all, but so many. This is a mistake on the part of our adults in convincing these children by holding meetings sayin', "There's

not a thing for our young people to do!” I heard that on TV one night, and they were referring to Los Angeles. It came over the air. They had a little rhubarb down there, black and white rhubarb and so on, and one of the first complaints was that there is “nothing for the young people to do in this city.” Well, if there’s nothing for them to do in Los Angeles, I don’t know where they’re going to find it!

In speaking about the education background—if it can be called that, I moved right on up to high school level very rapidly, figuratively [chuckle]—not by ability.

WORLD WAR I

The other highlights I can recall of Goldfield: the announcement of the Armistice—the war was over. By this time, Goldfield had purchased a fire truck to replace the two horse-drawn units that they had and I’d seen going to fires as a kid. I think that White Fire Truck (that’s the name of the manufacturer) it was bright red, but it was a White Truck Company manufacture—I think they still have it in Goldfield. [Laughing] I don’t know if they ever had a later model or not. When I left Goldfield and long after I arrived in Hawthorne, that was still the only fire truck that Goldfield had ever had. But the fire bells were ringing—they did not have sirens in those days—and the truck drove down Main Street, made a few passes and clanged the bells, and the mine whistles started to blow. And that’s my recollections of the end of “the war that was to end all wars.” Unfortunately it didn’t turn out quite that way.

Another aside to the war period: I recall receiving a letter from the White House in which Woodrow Wilson thanked me very much for buying—I cannot recall whether it was a Liberty Bond or whether they had stamps at that time because I didn’t buy it,

my father bought it in my name and you were enrolled forever. And a form letter came out, although we thought at the time that the President had taken time to sit down and write personally. And as I recall, it was signed by a fellow named McNulty, and in later years I would read about a powerhouse McNulty was on the Woodrow Wilson team.

As little kids were told—not at home, but around the school yard—we’d hear more damn lies about someone had written home, they’d been captured by the Germans, and he was bein’ mistreated or something, and he didn’t dare write it or they would mistreat him, so he wrote the note on the back of a postage stamp, and that was the way he got it by the censor. Even in those, what would you say “youthful years,” I guess I was beginning to develop my crotchety nature or something, and it hit me one day when a kid was telling me that, and I asked him, “Well, who gave people the idea to take the postage stamp off, or how did they get it off?” And I said they would come up with cock-and-bull stories. But I know I’ve actually seen kids throw rocks at a Spitz dog and one poor little dachshund, so we had prejudice—if not outright bigotry—in those days that little incidents of that kind would show, now you asked me about it.

And the other incident that I do vividly recall is when Harry Wiley, later state senator from Esmeralda county, was leaving for the army. And in those days when they left for the army, they left from their home town, usually drafted locally, examined locally; or drafted nationally, but of course examined locally and sent off. And Harry Wiley was a dinner guest in our home the night before he was leaving to win “the war to end all wars,” and he did, shortly thereafter, go to France. (And he sent me a postcard or two while he was in France.)

They brought some kind of miniature—wasn’t miniature, but about one of the larger

tanks, it'd be a baby tank today—army tank into Goldfield, no doubt it was in Tonopah too. But this was, that I recall, a drive to sell Liberty Bonds. My recollection is that we followed it down past the Flatiron building toward the T and C depot, and the tank slipped off in some soft dirt and got stuck in a ditch, and was rather embarrassing because I think they used some horse teams to pull the tank out of the ditch! [Laughter] Our mechanized army in World War I was not all that great.

FIRST AUTO RIDE

One other experience that has always remained: my memory of the first trip to Tonopah. Now bear in mind I had never been more than five miles out of Goldfield—going to Diamondfield one time, and over the summit for a ride another time in horse and buggy. But my first automobile ride of any distance, other than around the town, was going to Tonopah with my mother and a friend of hers one day. They used Packard automobiles, and I believe there were nine passenger units—they had the fold-up seats. Behind the middle would be the front seat in which the driver sat and two passengers, and there was a second section similar to our modern station wagons—three-seated station wagons—but these little fold-up seats that would fold into the back of one of the seats. I sat on one of those for a brief period, and then my mother insisted I sit on her lap or something.

But the highlight of that trip—seeing Tonopah for the first time and leaving Goldfield for more than five miles—was stopping at the Halfway House for lunch. There were just two tracks, no road, no highway, but for some reason they would leave about ten—and it was only twenty-five miles the entire trip—but they would get to the

Halfway House and stop, have lunch, proceed on up the hill to what is now Divide (in fact it *was* Divide in those days) and then drop down into Tonopah—an entirely different route than the present highway follows. The Halfway House was located—I determined later—in the general area of Klondike Wells. Klondike Wells would be to the west of the highway, and that was placed there to serve the railroad. And the Halfway House, who operated it, I do not know.

I remember the day we stopped there, Herbert Pickel, who was a great house mover out of Goldfield, was in eating with his crew; and he had a huge moving wagon pulled by horses, and a house sittin' on it, and the house had to wait, everyone had to wait, till they went in to have their lunch [laughter]!

The stage driver and owner was known as Johnny Martin. After leaving Goldfield, I was told, Johnny Martin moved to Lancaster, California. I heard nothing of him for years—no particular occasion—but it was my understanding that he and his brother went into the stage business and also operated a garage in Lancaster. I've never attempted to check it out, but others who knew the Martins said it was true, and that the small stage line they started out of Lancaster was developed into the Pickwick Stages, later to be taken over by the Greyhound Lines. So the man who started a stage career in Goldfield [laughing] was really a beginner and a pioneer in that field because many of the areas, I understand, that he served with his little line is now daily served by the big Greyhound Line.

ETHNIC SITUATION IN GOLDFIELD

In Goldfield we had, as I recall, very few Injuns, some would come in from Lida occasionally. I don't know whether the Orientals were permitted to get off the

train, because they might have had difficulty getting *on* one—in some areas—but my understanding was that they were not to remain overnight in Goldfield. It was a carryover I believe, from the earlier days in northern Nevada, and all; the laboring people always during the coolie labor, the slave labor competing with them. That was a strong rule in Goldfield.

There were several “colored” families as we were taught to call them in those days, because “black” was not a proper word. (Now by modern standards we are supposed to reverse it. Call ‘em what you want.) There was one black girl when I entered school. We went through grade school together those first few years in Goldfield, and her family moved to Tonopah later. And we completed grade school in Tonopah and attended high school together. She stayed with us all the way; she was the only one in our class. Her name was Eloise Fields, and she was a cute little chick, too.

SOCIAL SCENE IN GOLDFIELD

You mentioned the social side, I was so small, you know nothing other than hearsay, gossip—there was a lot of that. The big dances they had in the Elks hall in Goldfield, not just the Charity Ball, but other social events. My mother often said that some of the ladies even though it was catalogue-style in ordering—they would send to San Francisco each season to have the best dress at the ball. And I’d been in the building many times; it was a huge ballroom, a three story stone building—the Elks home in Goldfield—and that was one of the two social centers.

The Goldfield Hotel, in its lobby, on occasion would have huge dancing parties. They had—convention rooms and such as we have today were not even considered in

those days. It was usually some town hall or the theater where all the meetings were held, but for the social events, the Elks hall was the grand ballroom—was the center of attraction. It was located north of the Goldfield Hotel across Highway 95 (as it is today) in the center of the block, or near the center. The big fire that levelled Goldfield (I think they had two, but the big one of ’21 or ’22) got the Elks hall and the *Goldfield News* building, as it was known, another huge brick building that was located on the corner of, what we call ninety-five was on Crook Street and Columbia.

STREET AND BUILDING LOCATIONS

When I mention those street names, that brings to mind another thought; many people considered Columbia the main street of Goldfield, running north and south. The Goldfield Hotel fronts on Columbia Street, and as I just stated, the Elks hall and the *Goldfield News* building. And Columbia Street ran due north or northeast—I don’t know which—but anyhow, in the northerly direction to the town of Columbia which is another little separate town from Goldfield. Goldfield was never incorporated to my knowledge—at least not in my time. And whether Columbia had any separate governmental status, I’m not certain. But as I recall they did have a post office in Columbia, the Sisters school; the Sisters hospital was located in Columbia, and the T and T [Tonopah and Tidewater] Railroad was located in Columbia, as were the two large mills—there was the Western Ore Reduction, and I don’t recall the name of the other. I’m not speaking of the huge Consolidated Mill which was farther north and west around the bend, as we called it, of Columbia Mountain.

Main Street was one street west of Columbia and had many businesses and

stores, and that's in the "four corners" of Main Street and Crook which is now Highway 95, were located the "big four," which some called in those early days. The Northern Saloon probably gained the most notoriety in later years because that was Tex Rickard's saloon. The Northern, the Palace—I believe John Shirley, prominent in Silver Peak history—had the Palace, on the corner the Hermitage, which is the saloon that my father and Herman Webster had, the third one, and I don't recall the name of the fourth [Mohawk] one. The Hermitage, the Palace, the Northern—not the Mouse because Patty Touhy had the Mouse farther up the street.

And then immediately south of the "big four" was the red-light district, as we had known. The ladies in their politeness would usually say the "lower end of town." No matter what mining camp, if the red-light district was located on top the hill, it would still be the lower end of town in the minds of some.

FOR FUN AND PROFIT

I do recall as a very small boy going down there early in the morning and hustling beer bottles and whiskey flasks. Now this was back prior to Prohibition days, because we would receive a penny each for each beer bottle, and a nickel for each whiskey flask we recovered—clean, no soap. We were told to wash them in hot water and use b-b gun shells: get a shell from a b-b gun and take all the pellets out and that would really shake it and get all the dirt out and scalding hot water we were supposed to clean them and take them to different saloons and sell them.

It must be recalled that the whiskey for the most part came in barrels in those days, and not in bottles. And people would go in with their flasks, *men* would (I say people—the women weren't permitted in those [laughing]

pre-ERA days in a saloon, only the girls from the lower end of town, and they were very restricted after midnight.)

The whiskey would be drawn from the keg and sold according to the size of the bottle, paid for, and much of the beer the same way. They actually filled bottles of beer (although there was no way of capping it, cork did not make it so good) but much of the beer was sold in pitchers. I remember as a little kid it was called "rushing the can" or "rushing the growler," and many of them—miners sometime would want their little nip and they'd have a little beer put in place of the coffee if they're not coffee drinkers. There used to be a screw top on the old lunch buckets. They were more vertical than horizontal as they became in later years. Today they look like a tool box, but they had that screw cap, and it acted something like a thermos bottle, but without the heat.

Well, I was never old enough to sell newspapers. My older brother had a route, and I remember one time he took me with him. And I walked in that *Goldfield Tribune* building, and standing back in the pressroom I was stricken with awe; that huge press, about the size of the one we have in our shop now, a Meihle Number One, turnin' out those papers—not very many, a few hundred an hour—and two linotypes sittin' there, and I was just flabbergasted. That was, I guess, the first real thrill I had being around a newspaper office—was in the *Goldfield Tribune* then, and the same building I spoke of earlier, was often called the *News* building.

There was not much need for money; we were a very poor family. We liked to have things once in a while, and our pastime was riding burros. We couldn't afford hay, and the ownership of these burros was always in dispute. They'd been brought there by prospectors, and they had just been turned

loose to roam the hills. Some claimed title to a burro, and then the burro's entitled to reproduce like everyone else except the mules, I guess. (That was always a confusion to us why mules couldn't reproduce and burros could. We had to have our first exposure to sex education [laughter]. We'd ask these questions why horses and burros could have babies and the mules couldn't, and we'd go through all this.)

But we'd get up early in the morning and then just start out with a rope, and we knew burros by name and their temperament, which ones to stay away from. And by slowly walking up—strange thing about a burro: you'll run, and he'll run you to death; you'll never catch him. You get up close and kind of toss the rope over his neck, and you'd figure he was caught; then you walk up and loop the rope. And we rode them bareback, enjoyed it.

Some of the kids around town would have a cart ("burro cart" they called it, pulled by a single burro, single shafts, some makeshift harness) and we'd get together. If we caught the burro before the kid down the street who happened to have a cart, why we'd make deals—go joint venture and go around askin' people if we could haul their garbage or clean up around their yards or their property and make twenty-five or fifty cents that way. But say, when you realize that I left there before I was eight, I hadn't had too much chance to get in on the business end of it [laughter]!

FRIENDS AND OTHER PEOPLE IN GOLDFIELD

I cannot truthfully say that I remember Ben Alexander. He left Goldfield; his mother took him from Goldfield to Hollywood to be a movie star. There were two; I'm trying to think of the other one—child stars and which came

first I don't know—but Fred Thomas, who was a Presbyterian minister in Goldfield, left there and I guess left the ministry, too, because he became one of our cowboy heroes of the 1920s. And he acted in many, many movies of the era of—contemporary with Tom Mix and Buck Jones.

I do recall later years, Mrs. Hatton, the wife of later to be Judge Hatton, took her three sons to Hollywood hopin' they would all be movie stars. Will Jim, as we knew him (I don't know if it was William James, but he was always known as Will Jim, now practicing law in Las Vegas) probably appeared in more movies than his two brothers, Charles and John, because we all waited almost breathlessly when the silent film would come to Tonopah—"Omar the Tent Maker." Will Jim appeared in that act as a boy that was being sacrificed as a hostage or something. And in the show, why, they were supposed to have sawed him in half, or cut him in half, or something, and we just couldn't understand that. After he returned to "Tony" we insisted that he open his shirt wide; we wanted to see if there were any marks or stitches on him [laughter]!

He and his brother Charles, now deceased, later operated the Hatton store in Reno, by the way. I believe they all appeared in "Peck's Bad Boy" with Wesley Barret. And we used to say that Will Jim might have been miscast in *that* show, but Charley and John, they couldn't have found two better performers for "Peck's Bad Boy" [laughter]!

I'm interlocking Goldfield and Tonopah now, as you can see, because of the families, there was such a move. Those were rather large towns by Nevada standards in those days, and we didn't know everybody in town! [Laughter] But we get talkin' and, "Oh yes, I came from Goldfield."

Oh, that's where I first met Maude Frazier. She was teaching eighth grade at the Sundog School.

Mary Ellen Glass: Your parents must have been well acquainted with Ole Elliott, perhaps, Billy Murray, the famous Kid Highley...

Yes. My father would be a competitor in a sense, they ran the same type of business, and I would hear my mother and father speak of him around the house. I remember Kid Highley in particular, now that you raise that, that was a common name. He was always, not in some kind of jam, but well very much in the limelight, things going around. There was Ole Elliott, Kid Highley and I think someone else—moved to Ely in later years into the Northern there.

Of the names that we would hear as little kids in those days—why they seemed so far away from you—one was Charles R. Evans. And I can still see the placards around Goldfield: “The Goldfield Man, Charles R. Evans for Representative in Congress.” And he lived in what to us would be a beautiful house in those days. It's up in the—I can't use the word “summit” because that's not proper—but just as you enter Goldfield from Tonopah and make the swing by the Highway maintenance station, just a short distance east. It's a large, green house, and I think that still—it's been repainted two or three times a green with white trim, and that to me was one of the finest houses in Goldfield; although for some reason, he was on the wrong side of town for the elite, or the “upper crust,” because most of the affluent in those days lived in the general area of what is now U.S. 95 as it makes the right angle turn going south to Las Vegas. The foundations—even some brick remnants of

some of these beautiful homes—are still to be seen right at that corner. And from there on up to the Sundog School, that is where the more affluent people in Goldfield lived. We were well down the street on the other side of town, I can assure you that.

I became very well acquainted with the Feutsch family in Tonopah, knew them only slightly in Goldfield. There were two brothers, Carl and Joe Feutsch, and I'm trying to remember if they were actually partners or if they had separate saloons in Goldfield, because I believe the brother Joe went to Ely with the Arlangs. Now somewhere the Arlangs were related [to the Feutsch's]. I remember the Arlang girl very vividly, and I know she moved to Ely later because she was one of the smartest girls—or students—the girls were always the smarter students in those days, I remember, maybe still are! Trying to pinpoint her first name—but anyway the Arlang girl moved to Ely, and I think part of the Feutsch family. That, of course, could be checked out, when they did.

Well, I frankly don't recall knowin' the Feutsches or, as you say, about talkin' of this one or that one. You must remember that this was the World War I period that my memory goes back to, and for example, the Feutsch name would be German, and those people of German descent—I don't know about the Feutsches, I do know about the Laubs—they went through the rigors of hell merely by having a German name.

My closest associates—you might say almost my buddy—was a year or so older than myself, later to be known as Big Red Thompson, Jim Thompson. We'd ride burros together, we'd roam around the mines until we got chased away from the danger spots—the “glory holes”—and Jim later lived in Virginia City and Reno for many years working for the

Isbell Construction Company and became one of their heavy equipment transport men.

We got into Columbia Town one day and I know we got into a fist fight with the two Metscher brothers, and I've become quite well acquainted with the son of one of them who is a Nevada history buff; he's been to my home many times showing pictures.

And then the others that I've been close to would be Helen and Tommy Dunn. Tommy is now deceased; Helen is a retired teacher living in Reno, and she was always my pal and protector because she baby-sat for me, you might've called it in those days. They'd leave one of the older girls around, and the different ones. Nearly everyone in those days would fight with the sister. We had all boys but one, and that was the only sister we had, and I'd fight with her as most kids do; but Helen was always my protector.

Then nearby us was the Olson family—Oscar and Bridget Olson. And they had several children: Lillian, now deceased, Frances, living in Reno I believe. Most of the family is in Reno now, although some of them are here in Hawthorne, one daughter. The Olsons had Lillian, Frances, Catherine, Charlie, Mary—they had about six children themselves. One of the daughters recently retired as postmaster in Hawthorne, Catherine McKenna.

And her husband, James McKenna, was another one we were well acquainted with in Goldfield, but didn't travel with too much because he had an advantage over us—he could ride a horse. His family had a dairy there and so they'd use the horse to deliver the milk, sometimes right over the side of the horse—the heavy cans—or into the can you had at home, or hitched up to the milk wagon; and we couldn't keep up with him. We were the burro riders, but we became very close friends after he had moved to Hawthorne.

Walter Baring and I later kidded each other that we were born ten days and two blocks apart in Goldfield, but I did not recall Walter as a youth in Goldfield. The Koontz brothers, yes, John, Charlie. There was Will, a brother who was killed in a truck accident at Boulder Dam. But there were the four brothers, John, Will, Louis—we called him "Nuts" at the time—and then the youngest brother I've known all my life is Kayo Koontz. Those are not his initials. He was a feisty little devil.

Smokey [the burro] has been publicized from time to time, an' he actually was a little runt donkey (for those who don't understand "burro") who was an alcoholic. It started as a gag somewhere among the men. This little burro seemed to enjoy a taste for beer. And as he grew up—or he didn't actually grow up, he just stayed pretty much the same size—well, Smokey knew how to work the alley behind the saloons of Goldfield, kick on the door if necessary or if they see him comin', they would put out a pan of beer. And that was probably the largest part of Smokey's diet, was that pan of beer. And then as a gag, they taught him to smoke cigars, and he'd actually hold a cigar in his mouth. I've seen pictures somewhere and I just don't know where to get hold of one, but Smokey in a parade with a cigar in his mouth.

But he would always weave and bob and he was worthless as far as hitching up to a cart or attempting to ride or getting any work out of him which burros are supposed to be beasts of burden—but little Smokey, I remember seem' as a kid on more than one occasion, and lapping up his pan of beer.

But the other colorful characters besides Smokey and maybe some individuals I've mentioned in the early days, the one little fellow who hauled garbage, and I believe, at times, would take a contract to clean out some

of the outdoor “privies,” as we called them. And for as far back as I can remember, and even hearin’ my own mother refer to him, the only name that the man, to my knowledge ever had, was Shithouse Shorty. And that’s the only name he was ever known by. I’m sure it wasn’t his true name [chuckling], but if he had another one, I never heard it.

And there are a few old-timers left around Reno right today who were from Goldfield. One comes to mind right away, Helen Dunn, a retired schoolteacher there in Reno. She’d verify that in a minute. She knew him, probably describe him better than I could. Johnny Koontz over in Carson City, former Secretary of State—any of the old-timers you just mention the name to them and they’ll tell ya exactly what his work was, what a little fellow he was, what a pleasant fellow he was. I think that somewhere along the road he should be worked into somebody’s history, and not by name of Mr. Short or Mr. Long or anything else, but just the name that everybody knew him by [chuckle].

TONOPAH LABOR

We were really too young to realize or understand any impact of the strike that had gone on (now I’m speaking of 1907, you see, 11 years later, in 1919 when I moved), that we didn’t understand at all, but in spite of our early age, we were very much concerned with the war. And as soon as we—I can think back to the Goldfield Daily Tribune came out—and as soon as we could get hold of it, not inclined to read newspapers at that time, but we would read the war stories on the front page. So at least to me that was one of my most vivid memories, was the war period. Was it ever going to end? What would happen to us? Who was going to win? And we didn’t know what it was all about or why we had gotten into it,

but we understood by the propaganda that the Kaiser was going to take over the world, and that Woodrow Wilson was the one man who was going to stop him from taking over the world. We didn’t want him coming over here.

It was left to us—we knew none of the international politics involved—couldn’t at that age I don’t believe—and none of the ideologies, anything of that nature, didn’t have any bearing, it was just—the Kaiser was the bad guy and Woodrow Wilson was the good fellow. And we paid not much attention—well, the plight of the French seemed to be another thing that was impressed upon us—very little about Britain, very little about Belgium or any of the other nations involved. And the Balkan states, all of them, were into it, but we didn’t seem to know about them.

We were too distant from it, by years I guess, to understand the full economic impact of the ore running out in the mines and some of them closing down, because it first hit us even as young people when they placed a big sign over a saloon—it was down on Main Street; I believe Walter Church ran that—and there was a huge sign painted on it: “If you stick, you will win in Goldfield.” And that naturally aroused the curiosity, and we started asking our parents or older kids, “Well, what’s this all about? What does it mean?” And that’s when they started to explain to us that the mines were startin’ to peter out, and that it might go the way of other mining camps that had become ghost towns.

There were the two big mine strikes. When we arrived in Tonopah in 1919, why, the miners were out on strike, and that one, to my recollection, was settled soon afterward with the miners gaining very little. But one incident, now I’m trying to recall whether it was the 1919 or the 1921 strike; there were

two major strikes there at that time, which, incidentally, revolved considerably around the Pittman Silver Act. Tonopah had been rather free from labor strikes, as far as I knew, but under the Pittman Silver Act—the purchase of silver at \$1.29 an ounce—the mining companies were gaining a great windfall. And in one of those two strikes, maybe in both, my recollection is that the miners were seeking a raise from four dollars or the muckers from four dollars to four-fifty a day, and the miners from four-fifty to five dollars, which the companies did not want to pay.

In the 1919 strike whether all the companies were out or not, I can't say; I just wasn't that close to it. In 1921, we'd lived in Tonopah a couple of years, one or two of the companies agreed to grant the miners their raise and they did not go out on strike. As I recall, the West End was one. (Lillian Ninnis in Reno could probably give you more direct information because her husband Fred was the mill superintendent for the West End and one of the officials.) And I recall the arrangements bein' made to allow the single miners, muckers, workers to step aside and let the married men with families to support, who were out on strike at the other mines, come over to the West End and the one or two that stayed open; it might have been the Midway. They were given the chance to work, but they gave up part of their wage to support the single men for board and room at the Finn boarding houses, two boarding houses in Tonopah operated by Finnish people. And they had the rooms upstairs and served family style meals. And I think it was that arrangement that possibly helped in the final negotiation of the settlement of the strike, because some of the mining companies would decline to grant the request of their miners; they're a little concerned they wouldn't get them back when the strike was over [chuckle].

The West End had some of the top miners and did very well by continuing to produce ore, granting the workers their big increase—as it was called in those days, fifty cents a day—but producing the ore and selling it before the Pittman Silver Act ran out.

Two other instances that might be related to those: do remember my dad warning some miners—an' I was eavesdroppin'—that Mickey Sullivan was comin' in and they'd better keep the damned I.W.W. out, or it would ruin it in Tonopah the way it wrecked it in Goldfield. Mickey Sullivan was one of these walking delegates for the I.W.W.'s who thrive on strikes. And he brought in a mediator, or whatever they might be termed back in those days. The Labor Department, the U.S. Labor Department, had some very sketchy system of tryin' to intervene in strikes, and they had a meeting at the ballpark. There was some difficulty in getting a place downtown because even the *miners* would not allow the I.W.W.'s to use their homes. And at the ballpark—this federal mediator's name was Lord, and that was about the highlight of their meeting, the day, was when Mickey Sullivan says "We have the Lord with us now, who was against us?" That was one of the corny sides of it.

But in the '21 strike, the state militia was called in (I do not recall whether they had the title "militia" or "police" that's been kicked around many years in Nevada), and the way that the police—the state—intervened was, there was an alleged shooting. We happened to be living up on Valley View Street next to the old tennis court, at the time—ol' frame shack. And between the tennis court and the Silver Top shaft and dump was a narrow road leading up to the Tonopah Mining Company property and over to the Belmont. There were other roads leading to them, but this was one that led into the area. Some of the scabs who had been imported had been downtown

(it was always advised and recommended they stay away from town, but they had gone downtown to a theater and a bar or somewhere) and upon reaching that narrow pass, as you might call it near the tennis court a pretty good fist fight ensued. And the local miners really worked over two or three of the scabs that had been imported, most of them from Arizona, and they went screaming to the boss and all, or back. And the police had been called out in the meantime, usually slow to get there; the police were usually sympathetic to the local miners against the interlopers. My mother'd make us stay in; we wanted to go over and see the fight, 'cause I recognized one or two of the local fellows involved in it. But it was just, I would say, a matter of within ten minutes and the police were coming up, but we heard some shots to the north. And they came directly from the area of the residence of the superintendent of the Belmont Mining Company, that was L. R. Robins. And the report went out that the local people were shooting the scabs, and from that day to this, no one has ever been able to convince me that Robins didn't fire the shots himself as a good decoy and a cause to have state intervention.

Well, the state police (I think they had dropped the word "militia" then known as the state police, whether it was affiliated or whether it was part of the National Guard, I don't believe; but I didn't even bother to check that, never have, didn't want to) sent in these two or three big, burly fellows in uniform from Reno with a bunch of University students, and that's why I think it has to be somewhere connected with the equivalent of what is not the National Guard, you know, "weekend warriors." And they come in and they were gonna maintain safety in Tonopah.

Well, that turned out to be the damndest donnybrook you ever saw. The miners had no money, but scraped up a little on

their sympathy. And they put a few decoys themselves to entertain some of the state policemen, both uptown and at didn't use weapons; they used their fists. It was just an out-and-out Saturday night brawl as far as we were concerned.

The mines reopened, of course, I believe most of them did, or all of them did, but it wasn't that strike that hit Tonopah. You see it was the eventual termination of the Pittman Silver Act, and then the—not gradual, but rapid—drop in the price of silver between 122 and '29 that knocked Tonopah on its heels.

TONOPAH, 1920S

You mentioned the fire in '22. That started eleven in the morning, I think about 3:15, because I had to go sell papers, 'n I wanted to see every part of the fire. That was really a big one, took both sides of the street. The Big Casino, that was the biggest loss. That was the center of attraction. The Big Casino faced what is now Highway 95 on the south side. Tonopah Bottling Company across the street, that went up in fire. I can't think what was in the building next to it, but that was salvaged, for the most part, and later became Lee Heixerson's Mizpah Garage. And on the corner, why, Stanley Langille opened the first Chrysler sales in Tonopah.

The Big Casino was re-built, but this time with kind of a side alley entrance and facin' back off because someone had discovered the old, ancient statute which prohibits any house of prostitution facing a main thoroughfare in Nevada. And yet, all these years, why, the Big Casino had faced right on to the Main Street. There was a situation similar to that in Riepetown, Nevada, and I think that was some years before. (I've read about it and I understand it's an accurate story.) But when the authorities out of Ely

decided to clamp down on Riepetown, and they attempted to enforce this old statute, the little town governing board in Riepetown held an emergency meeting and redesignated a different street as the main street of the town. And that was their method. Of course the law says “main thoroughfare or any thoroughfare.”

One of the experiences we had during the fire was cutting and burning our fingers, but it was worth it: going through the hot ashes—some broken glass—recovering the burnt nickels that the slot machines had burned, melted down and all. We were just grabbin’ and puttin’ ’em in our pocket and almost burned holes in our trousers, and I know that I gathered up more than five dollars in burned nickels that day. And workin’ as kind of a teammate with me was Jack Douglass, now living in Reno and one of the owners of the Cal Neva Club and other enterprises. And I’ve often said, I think that’s where he got his inspiration to go into the slot machine business [laughter]—the success we had the day of the Big Casino fire! So he’s often laughed about it and said it could have a bearing on it; we had a very profitable day.

Oh, it was bad, the criss-crossing of the fire hoses, and then a fire hose would catch on fire and burn the hose; and they’d use a little dynamiting on the back Street and finally contained it in that general area at the lower end of Tonopah.

That wasn’t the only time that Douglass and I teamed up to make a little money because by this time, I had gone to work at the Bonanza office, sellin’ newspapers and being—well, I’ll back up there for a second—I’d gone to work there. Now if I can just jump from ’22 to 1926,—I advanced from just sellin’ papers on the streets to a paper route, and then to the printer’s devil, as they called it, before they would enroll us as an apprentice

with the union in which I was later enrolled and became a printer’s apprentice.

But in 1926, I recall very vividly, the Republicans stormed into town in their caravan ’cause in those days they made a caravan trip completely around the state—each party—bringin’ all its candidates and several cars and have a rally and a meeting, actually had torchlight parades in Tonopah. But this one in ’26, I was, there in the Bonanza office and heard that Balzar would be there the next day with Morley Griswold and all the team. And so I asked Scoop Conners who was later to be my partner in the back shop; he was printin’ some cards. And that was another political must in those days: that each town you went into, you went to the local printer and had him print you some cards. And above all, it must have the “bug” on it, the union label. It was dynamite if you didn’t. Well, he was printin’ the cards and I asked him who was going to distribute them. He didn’t know, so I asked if he would put in a plug for myself and Douglass to get the corner on the market, and he did.

Well, the next day, Douglass and I played hooky from school in the afternoon—in high school this time, freshmen—and we put up a lot of large cards for Balzar and Griswold, passed out a lot of them in the stores, distributed them around, and we each got five dollars! That was worth gettin’ dinged at school and some make-up work because we figured we were doin’ pretty well. We thought this was a great idea. Of course I was workin’ the Republican side of the street, and Douglass coming from a staunch Democratic family, had cut him in on that. He decided to go to work through his dad and others and see if he couldn’t do the same when the Democrats came to town. Well, it was a little different set-up then. That was the night that they were going to have a torchlight parade

or a parade of some kind, and they would be passing out cards and puttin' up some of the large ones, so we moved in and cornered that one. And I'll never forget both of us really got bawled out, skinned, call it what you want, by an older man named Bill Sawle (his son later was a prominent educator in the state of Nevada for many years). But that had been Bill Sawle's assignment for I don't know how long—probably as long as we'd been around—with the Democratic party, and we'd gone in ahead and shortcutted him; we got paid for doing it. And then some way the party pacified Bill Sawle and put him in charge of the parade or something, but he didn't want these two young squirts comin' around and cuttin' in on his territory. We did make a killin' that year by gettin' the corner on both parties.

But that's the way we would do in Tonopah, as I say, rustle wood, clean out garages, yards. Another occasion Douglass and I were big businessmen. We took a contract to clean out a garage—or a shed, as we called them in those days, for a Mrs. Harris who lived just two doors east of Douglass. (And that was from the old Harris family of the First National Bank in Reno, prominent then and one of the Harris' livin' in Tonopah.) We worked all day long. We rented a burro and cart from another kid, gave him fifty cents. We thought we were going to get a dollar and a half each, so we had to take fifty cents off the top and split the two-fifty to one and a quarter was our net. Then Douglass got the wild ideas that we shouldn't haul all that stuff to the dump, just the real trash and junk, take to the dump; we set some stuff aside. I remember there was something like a little electric plate with broken porcelain. And it was about six o'clock at night—hadn't been home to supper or anything else—and we went down to the secondhand dealers—Kelly and McElvy. McElvy was a Scotsman and Kelly was as

English as Winston Churchill (I don't know where he got the name). And we bargained, and bartered and wrangled, and after about ten minutes of arguing with these two older men, why, we got three dollars for the pile of junk. So we really made another killing that day by gettin' into the junk business, as well as the cleaning business.

But not just ourselves, but so many—most of the young people—around would do that. There was work available. and that way we would get our little spending money. We didn't have too much to spend it on because no one had an automobile, didn't have to buy gasoline, and tire patches, or anything else which were a necessity in those days, patching the tubes. And it just seemed that we were on the go all the time.

I'm trying to contain this as much as I can to our useful side before we get into this angle part about the politicians and the old goats and what went on—which will come even before I left the *Bonanza* office in Tonopah. I'd say I had a large nose and sometimes big ears about things that went on and what I saw or heard.

The lines between the elite and the not-so-elite were much more definitely drawn in Tonopah. As I say, we were the kids of miners. My dad there for a while had a bootleg joint in Tonopah, and very unsuccessful at that; there were too many in Tonopah. That was one place where [laughter]—havin' a little bar, as they called it, because bootlegging or open defiance of Prohibition in Nevada was looked upon much differently than probably in other states or at the federal level. (In fact, remind me to tell you funny incidents about when I was carrying papers one night, and about the Prohi's coming to town.)

But for the most part, well, we just didn't have money. The large families, even the small families, it was livin' not hand to mouth—but

mouth to mouth barring any illness or loss of a job.

I think on one baseball team there—you talk about nationalities or ethnic groups in which the Slavic did predominate. And I use the word “slavic” because in Tonopah the Serbians were predominant. There were those who were proud to be designated as Montenegrins, and there were some of the Croatians, or “Crovakian,” as they pronounced it, all from what is now called Yugoslavia. And we learned a lot of history from them, history of central Europe, more than we could in later years reading David Lloyd George or Woodrow Wilson who botched the whole thing up along with Clemenceau of France.

See, at one time there had been the kingdom of Montenegro and the kingdom of Serbia, and they merged. Croatia was under the Austro-Hungarian rule for years, but there in Tonopah even they—whatever differences they had in the old country, it was usually basically religion, they drew a harsh line there—they all banded together; had their own hall, was called the Serbian Young Men’s Society. And it was a little hall that sat directly west of the Jim Butler dump, one Street back from Main Street, located directly behind what is now the Harrington store, or Coleman store, in Tonopah, owned by John Harrington. They, like all the rest of us, scattered in various parts of town. The shift in town would be wherever there was low rent. I mean we had to go to the low rent district whether—which side of town it was in.

And not just the Serbs, we had a number of the Italians, although not nearly in the proportion of the total population as they would be, for example, in Sparks, Yerington or even some other communities. Yet the few Italians there were rather successful in business. Fabbi had the bakery—at one time operating two bakeries, one uptown and one

down in Midway Gulch where a number of them lived, baking the bread there, bringing it uptown and also selling it at the bakery down there.

We had a large number of Finns, Halder Rex was one of the few Swedes, I think, but we had a large number of Finns. And a reasonable number of us Irish, and of course the English and Scotch. You mention a nationality, and we pretty well had it in Tonopah, that is, we were the pot—the melting pot—downtown.

Now the Tonopah Mining Company had houses for their supervising employees, exactly alike, above Valley View (it would be goin’ toward Mizpah Hill, as we called it). The Tonopah Belmont, at least one executive—that was one of the finer homes up there. They lived up on the hill, which would be the northeast side of Tonopah. Then you’d come down just like in a bowl or a wash basin, and cross over and back up there would be, oh, more of the middle income group livin’ there.

Then over on Mt. Brougher, which is completely on the opposite side of the town, but high up on the hill, there again you would find a few of the more economically successful people livin’ up there, the Castle, as we called it. Arthur Raycraft, the bank cashier, lived there; Judge Hatton in later years. Captain Walter Rowson, in my time, lived in the Eagle’s Nest, which was a rather exclusive home that had been built prior to his coming there. They were at the far ridge, as we called it. George Southworth managed to get up in that area up in there; Bill Forman, who would be the grandfather of the judge in Reno now, lived up in there; Judge Cuddy, who was the Justice of the Peace, referred to as Judge Cuddy.

And coming down a block or so, well, you’d find Doctor P. D. McLeod; Herman Budelman at the West End [mine]; Hugh Henry Brown, whose widow recently wrote

a story of early days, *Lady in Boomtown*; Mark Bradshaw; Judge Frank Dunn—they would live up on *that* hill. And that seemed to be *their* domain, that was private housing, where the first group I spoke of, the company housing was provided by the company. And generally, when you get down off the hill, well, you were back downtown livin' like the rest of us [chuckling].

There were very few blacks, but there were some; Charlie Stewart had a shoe shine parlor, little card room, sold candy, shoe laces, had punch boards in there. That was there when I went to Tonopah in 1919. He was a very successful businessman for years and years; he died just a few years ago at the county hospital in Tonopah. And B. W. Fields who had moved from Goldfield to Tonopah, had a cleaning shop. And some worked; there was a porter at the Mizpah Hotel. But of the few blacks, they were rather successful, I mean as well as anybody in the town.

And the Orientals. We had two Chinese laundries: one was located on Brie Main Street opposite the Midland Garage, and another down—well, I'd call it north and west of the West End dump—the general area behind where the L and L Motel is located now. There was a huge two-story house directly behind it, that was the Graystone, and that's where the girls who lived down the line, most of 'em stayed, that was their rooming house up there. And then next to that was another Chinese laundry. The mistake the Chinese made were locatin' their laundries—the one by the West End dump and the one on Erie Main Street too close to the Jim Butler dump—because when we had nothing else to do, in the evening when we wanted a little excitement, our favorite pastime was “let's go rock the Chinks.” We'd stand up in the dump and both Chinese laundries had corrugated metal roofs, unfortunately. It just

took the first three or four rocks bouncing off those corrugated roofs, and we didn't know whether they were screamin' in Mandarin or Cantonese, but those Chinamen would come out, and they usually would carry a butcher knife or something (don't know whether to scare us or whether they meant to use it) and screaming in Chinese, and away we would take off and have to hide out for a while, and they would look—they just didn't say “go away” or something—they were tryin' to get a hold of us and say “this is going to cease,” you know. There'll be no detente in this action [chuckling].

And then C. Y. Poy, who had his large yard (this again is down on Main Street in that L and L area located, well, very close to where the Big Casino was right on the Main Street) and he had a few chickens, but squabs. He was a great one on raising squabs and sellin' 'em. Sold firecrackers. It was a little kind of a Chinese store. You name it, but C. Y. Poy had it. So we did have quite a few of the Orientals in Tonopah. I don't recall any Japanese. All the Orientals were practically all Chinese.

Now Tonopah is different about the Indians—Goldfield wasn't—now Tonopah, you see, the Indians would come in from Smokey Valley; they'd been there for years. In that area they're nearly all Shoshone Indians. And out in Smokey Valley and Round Mountain—well in all through the ranches, you know in Monitor Valley—they worked for many of the older families, most of them the cowboy type. They were good ranch hands and some would move in, the kids would go to school there in Tonopah at the time they reached high school age. Not a great number, again, as you see in Yerington or even in Hawthorne, but we did have some Indians there. I was thinkin' of any other—.

Mentioning the grand balls in Goldfield at the Elks hall, and some at the Goldfield

Hotel, my memory of Tonopah, from the day I landed there till the day I left there, the social event of the year was the Elks charity ball each December. And obviously only a few of 'em that I ever attended myself because [I was] only a teenager in high school; they would let high school kids go, but below that, no. So I didn't get too much opportunity—although after movin' to Hawthorne, at various times, I did return over a period of many years—to take in the charity ball. It was the *real* social event, although there was another one that didn't have, let us say, the—well I'm lookin' for a word (and that's unusual when I can't find one) but—"lace curtain dressing" that the Elks charity ball'd have, which, really, it wasn't that bad.

But a little more on the downtown side was the musicians annual ball. That was always conducted in the Auditorium, as we called it in later years. (It had originally been the Airdrome and burned down, this building I speak of. Then the Knights of Pythias rebuilt it as a hall and later became the Auditorium, just the name. I believe now, in Tonopah, they call it their Convention Center. That was the big dance hall for Saturday night dances and many events.) But the musicians annual ball which—the music would start anywhere from eight-thirty to nine, the chosen Saturday of the year—and I'm not certain it was Saturday all the time because I recall some people having to go to work the next day, and just rushing home to change clothes. But the point is, it was an all-night dance with music ending about seven in the morning, and there'd be no less than four, five, maybe even six, bands that played in rotation. They'd start out with one of the two local competing orchestras from town that ordinarily played for the Saturday night dances. Oh, Bud Morris had one; Bill Logan sometimes would play in the same band,

at other times they were not. An' the local band would be made up of local citizens, I'll interject a few names. I recall Bud Morris had a band for many years. Arlene Frank—now livin' in Beatty, the widow of the late state Senator Bill Frank would play the piano. Billy Cardelli was also a piano player when needed, but would play the accordion; Bud Morris on the sax; and Elmer Tansie, who worked at the local bank and was quite a painter of the desert scenes (that was his hobby, many of his pictures are scattered around the state of Nevada today) would play the banjo; and they'd pick up a drummer here or there. That was one band; other local musicians would form a band to play throughout the year. But on this particular night the two town bands would hold the fort from, say, eight-thirty or nine up until about midnight. From then on, the replacement band would come from the red-light district. [There] would be one band from the Northern Club; one from the Big Casino, which was always the big band; and the Cottage Cabaret. It was one night of the year that the townspeople, both men and women, had an opportunity to hear some of that fine music that they didn't get to hear the other three-hundred and sixty-four days of the year [laughter]! But it would be an all-night affair and dance until about seven in the morning. Those were the two big events that I can recall, and as to say, both centering around dancing.

The only other real annual event, and it didn't rival—entirely different from the Fourth of July celebrations which was usually the big event, particularly for the kids with the Fourth of July celebration—but was the state basketball tournament. Tonopah was always in contention, but usually a bridesmaid and never a bride. Not until 1929 did Tonopah finally win its championship, although it had been in the finals back in the early twenties

against Fallon, against Reno two or three times, in and out.

Not the entire town, but business people who could get away from their business, working people would take what little vacation time they had or take time off without pay, to go to Reno in March of each year, and try to be there for the opening games on Wednesday and remaining through the finals on Saturday night, returning home on Sunday. But during those years that I was in high school, there'd easily be three or four hundred residents occupyin' one-quarter of the Old Gym at the University of Nevada, and sometimes slopping over into other people's sections or standing, because it was the greatest organized support project I have ever seen. An' Tonopah, as you understand, not having football, and only a semblance of a track team, no baseball—basketball was its game. (And the Tonopah of the twenties was more or less reproduced, we'll call it, following World War II in Virginia City, where the same rabid support for a winning was seen in Reno each year. It was *our* game in the twenties.)

The Fourth of July celebration, of course, centered around the kids' games on Main Street. The merchants would put up money (they were very liberal, even when they couldn't afford it), but every kid that entered *every* race got at least a dime or a quarter. And of course, the winners got fifty cents. And the adult committees—lots of volunteers—had ways of handling it so that no one really lost. And they knew the kids were gonna spend the money on confetti, firecrackers, "torpedos," as we called 'em (not the firecrackers, but another type of explosive that we used). And then the horse races on Main Street which—gave the adults—particularly the cowboys and cowgirls who came in from the outlying ranches—gave *them* a chance to compete and show off. And in some years, if the program would permit

it (enough time in the two-day celebration, usually the fourth and fifth), there would be a baseball game. But the main thing was the kids' races, all the contests—sack races and the horse racing, particularly in later years.

In the earlier years, they did have some mucking contests. The drilling, I guess, in the very early years, but in my time I saw only one drilling contest on the Main Street; the mucking contest, [I] saw several times. They'd set up the bins right by the Tonopah Club, but with the closing of the mines and all, they lost that.

They did have, two or three times that I recall, a tug-of-war and the teams would represent each mining company, such as the Belmont, Montana, West End, and Extension. The type of tug-of-war conducted then (not similar to the present-day firemen's water fights or pulling on a rope standing up with a hose across 'em)—it was somewhat similar, I guess, to a crew racing that you'll find at the college level in those schools that are near the water and have the oar teams, or the "crews" as they call them. The actual number of men—I can't recall, it was either eight or ten—but would lie almost prone, just a little inclined slant on one side with their feet braced against cleats, their knees tilted up a little, and rigid almost as a piece of steel. Their leader, or captain, sat at the opposite end of the huge board behind the opposing team, so that he would be facing his own team. Likewise the opposing team had their "Coxswain," as some call it—it was just like a coxswain with a rowing team. And while the tug-of-war would theoretically be a case of brute strength, this type conducted on those cleat boards were into almost a science, in which the coxswain would—his duty was to observe every slight movement of the opposing team, because once the "war" was on, so to speak, everybody went taut, and

they'd spar like boxers, freeze. They'd inch a little forward and try to bait the opposing team into makin' a move where they could pull them away from those cleats. And the coxswain—throughout the entire contest, with his own signals like a third base coach in baseball—would be tellin' 'em maybe, "Ease up a fraction." "Tighten 'er up a little bit." "Status quo." They had their own system and their own secret codes, and always hopeful that the first move of the *opposing* team would give him an opportunity to signal and to do what we'd planned to do—we can pull 'em off base. Once they got the real pull on 'em with that tremendous jerk, why, they would have the red flag across their side and it was a winner. And I've never seen that type of tug-of-war conducted anywhere but Tonopah, Nevada.

Now those were the twenties. We didn't know they were the "Roaring Twenties," until after we got into the Depression of the thirties *ourselves*, because we had that depression in Tonopah in '21 with the mine strike on and a little dip nationally. The entire twenties was kind of a day-to-day and year-to-year basis until the total loss of silver value, you might say (I believe it went down to twenty-five or twenty-four cents an ounce, eventually—late '29 or into the thirties). But after Black Tuesday when the New York stock market, in October of '29, and the downward spiral in the price of silver, that's when the "shiv wheels," as we called them on the gallows frames, came to a crunching halt.

And about the only one that I can think of that could've been happy at that time—although this particular group was not around then—and I'm speakin' now about the "environmental evangelists," the extremists, because the dust stopped showing up in the hills of Tonopah from the dumping of waste over the dumps. The shiv wheels

I mentioned became silent. There was no more sharpening of steel in machine shops, which often reached a number of decibels that OSHA [Occupational Safety and Health Administration] would not accept [chuckle]. If I seem a little sarcastic about that, I am, because it was like a town *dying*. We did have perfect air then, but that was about *all* that was left. And I've strayed into that because my thoughts now run towards Ely, McGill, and White Pine. Some years ago I spoke to Howard Gray (we were talkin' about the situation with the environmentalists), and he said, "Well, why in the hell don't you print it? Sounds good."

And the statement I made to him, I said, "There's no future breathing pure air on an empty stomach." I've seen later versions of virtually the same thing said, but I said, "This is where you have to be careful of going too far, crossing-too far." Now this is getting away from Tonopah history a little, but I wouldn't have agreed to talk unless I could get [chuckle] my little environmental politicking in there.

However, before the real dip in Tonopah, we did have two so-called "booms." You mentioned about the Divide boom, I was too small to really understand what was going on out at Divide, or at least not paying attention. I remember after that was tapering off, but still going very strong, why we would have "intermittent booms"—largely in the newspapers. It mattered not whether it was the *Bonanza* or the *Times* (*Tonopah Bonanza*, *Tonopah Times*, both dailies, six-day week; in those days we called them "Jim Crow dailies"). An' I've often said that more wealthy mineral discoveries were made, an' a greater tonnage, they were made in the newspaper editorial office. And more tonnage of ore was turned out over those two printing presses than ever came out of the mills [laughter] on the

hillside! It was a regular program we had to have, you know, to create a new strike here and there.

The Camp Gilbert strike, which I believe was around 1924 (I think I'm about right on that—'24 or '25—was goin' in '25 I know, but I think it was '24), that was a bonafide, legitimate discovery 'cause the Gilbert brothers had been prospecting out there for years. (Incidentally, *that* Gilbert family is not to be confused with the ones that were in the courthouse—Lida Gilbert, the auditor-recorder and her sons, this is an entirely different family.) Paid they did bring out a lot of good ore, and, of course, once they decided to make a boom out of it, then *everybody* began to locate claims, began to sell claims, companies were formed to sell stock. Well, Camp Gilbert, it was a short-lived camp in the sense of being a boom, but for many years thereafter, particularly during the depression, small quantities of ore were taken out.

Old C. C. Julian, the old promoter out of Los Angeles, he promoted Leadfield down near Beatty, Rhyolite—Bull Frog country. I never did get down there. He ran a special train from Los Angeles to Death Valley junction took them all in, and Leadfield was supposed to be the big one. Well, he'd gone back apparently and read some script of Rhyolite, Bull Frog, Greenwater, some of the others, and he just did a rerun twenty years or so later. And that one passed by rather quickly.

But '27, then the famous Weepah boom. Well, to those of us who were not involved—buyin' stock, sellin' stock, and possibly too young to know all the angles—it was like a big carnival. On a Sunday, if we could find anyone with a car and could scrape up enough money to get gas: "Let's go to Weepah." And after we got there, there was nothing—a lot of people standing around. Each one waitin' for the other to tell him what *he* knew, and their

hard whiskey sold over the plank in front of a tent, an' (I don't think 7-up had been invented yet; I'm sure it hadn't, those days ginger ale was a popular drink) naturally as kids, we had to go for the soft drinks—if we could get 'em or afford them. And Weepah has been so overworked, re-written and told, that I'm certainly not going to elaborate on that, other than I did see it, and it was just one more of the many overnight excitements from our standpoint—say "our," the younger generation of the time.

Incidentally, I think Hugh Shamberger has done a fine job in his little paperback story of Weepah. I think he tells it about as well as it can be told. He was one of the first to point out that—the famous Traynor-Horton discovery—which is played up in many movies, particularly during the time of the boom, many news stories—but Hugh was the first, that I can recall, who brought out, printed the fact that there was a *third* partner, another young man involved in that, and who took Traynor and Horton to court. And after a long and exasperating trial—but a wonderful review—of the grubstake law in Nevada, written or unwritten, was to be upheld, that he received a substantial settlement, roughly one-third of everything that was received by the younger Horton and his partner Leonard Traynor. I say I don't want to expand that because it's all in Hugh Shamberger's book, anything I say now would be only a reference to it.

And in that book that Hugh has put out, the full story is told of Weepah, including the famous third party in the Traynor-Horton Discovery. Most articles allude to the two young boys just out of high school—Frank Horton, Jr., whose father was head of the Electric Gold Mines Company that had operated in the area; and Leonard Traynor, later to become a deputy state mine

inspector—as the two young men who made the discovery. As Shamberger points out, while the third member of the trio might not have been on site at the time, he had contributed in the early prospecting adventures. An’ part of his Model T, even though transplanted to Traynor’ s Model T, was, you might say, an integral part of the financing of the entire project.

To come to the point, Shamberger is the first to my knowledge that reviews the long court trial in Tonopah in which Bill Schmidt, the third young man, sued Traynor and Horton and won a judgment for approximately ten thousand dollars, which represented one-third of what was earlier described as their fabulous payment of \$30,000 for the discovery. An’ anyone interested in history of Weepah or the basic common law doctrine of grubstake, as recognized in Nevada, would do well to review Shamberger’s summary of the court trial which includes direct reference and excerpts from the court proceedings, both at district court level and state supreme court, which upheld the findings of the lower court in that case.

YOUTHFUL PRANKS

Oh, a couple of times we stole some wine, didn’t dare steal whiskey, it was so costly during bootleg days. Probably couldn’t have handled it, and then we found out to our dismay, we couldn’t handle the wine either. Though one time we got caught, the other time we didn’t. And we did all those things as kids, and it was really an exciting life, the years went by all too fast.

They had one badger fight in Tonopah, but everybody knew ahead of time that he had blown it [laughter]! It was anti-climactic—the badger fight. Oh my God, Halloween! That went on for almost a week. There was “soaping night” when we soaped the windows;

“gate night” when you stole everybody’s gate and put it on a telephone pole or wherever you could hoist it; “clothesline night” which was bad, and some of us, I think most of us, always regretted that—you know where you cut someone’s clothesline. In fact it got so bad, we had to have an unwritten law that any kid caught cutting the clothesline of a widow or a woman who took in washing for a livin’, would get the hell beat out of him, and of some way to make him replace it. And that was the real damaging part because trying to replace a clothesline is something! And then, of course, on Halloween night itself that was the big one. And that’s what we called “S-H night,” and that’s the night the privies went tumbling over. Only once did we ever get caught pushing over an outhouse. How this fella gathered four of us together so fast, made us put it back up, then took us in the house and fed us cookies [laughter], I don’t know, but he was really fast on his feet. That was the only time that we really got nailed, but that was the common thing.

Another time, one of the close calls we had was up by the county barn, at the back end of east there’s another little barn, and a buggy shed, and the outside was like a little corral arrangement—large pile of manure. That was owned by Horace Chiatovich. There’d been a grocery store there. Chiatovich and Beko, the father of the present Judge Bill Beko, and Horace Chiatovich was a relative of many of the Chiatoviches in the Tonopah-Goldfield area. And we had a pretty good crew that night, and we decided to do something different, so we got that buggy out of the shed, worked harder than we’d probably worked all summer long, got some blocks; we pulled the buggy around, into the corral site, and we got some heavy blocks so we could brace it. And some got up on the manure pile and we pulled and pushed harder than

any horse would have to work [chuckle]. We finally got that damn buggy up on top of the little shed. We're tired, exhausted, pooped, wondered if it was worth it, and someone must have blown the whistle on us because we thought we'd get down and run or do whatever we had to do. We could see wining from the south, and over a hill from another road, the danger signal. The Tonopah police in those days had one automobile—it was an Oakland touring car. And in those days your temperature gauge was always out on the radiator cap. You looked clear out to the radiator to see the rise an' fall of the red line. Well, this Oakland wasn't satisfied just to have the red danger signal or warning signal (temperature reading) it had to have a fancy green circle. Well, someone spotted [it]; they said, "Jiggers!" that's a famous expression we'd use then—"Jiggers, it's the cops!" An' we'd look and it was easin' over—apparently it had gotten up the hill—and quietly was tryin' to coast down so that no engine would be runnin', and that one live circle with the double color was a dead giveaway for the cops. We could see it approaching, so we ducked off the shed, down the pile of manure like we were running, and we knew we wouldn't have time—they'd catch us—so we said we'd better dig in and almost burrowed into that big pile of manure, head first or side first, remained absolutely silent [chuckling]. And these cops without any lights on their car, though they came within thirty feet of us. But they cruised down around the shed. They got out and looked at the deal and we could hear them talkin', "They must have gone this way; let's go down and check the big barn." They checked the big barn, went down there; they looked in the barn. And, oh, they stayed in the area for about ten minutes. An' if you don't think that ten minutes can become an hour, try remaining still in a manure pile

sometime [laughter]! That was one of our few pranks that we did. Oh, we pulled our share of them.

Back into the Tonopah era. I alluded to the attempted business ventures of Jack Douglass and myself. I didn't want to leave it on that note that it was just Douglass and myself that worked up schemes and deals at times to try to make an extra two-bit piece or even fifty cents, if we could. On several ventures, whether it was rustling wood, possibly doin' a clean-up job, we had two very fine partners, Milo Banovich and Leon Merman. In fact, I was the junior member of the quartet because those three boys lived on the same block in Tonopah before I ever moved there. They were among the first boys that I teamed up with after moving to Tonopah, and they all lived in the same block just below the old shack on the hill that we called home. And that friendship, of course, had extended right to this day. Leon (we called him "Pinky") I believe, is living in Arizona or southern California, I'm not certain. Milo, like Jack Douglass, is a Reno resident right today, and very prominent, particularly in lodge circles. In fact in the past year he was honored by bein' made a thirty-third degree Mason.

One of the "firsts" that I think we can claim, that group there in Tonopah, was promoting the Fourth of July committee (and the Fourth of July celebration was always the big event in Tonopah) to including what we called a "coaster ride" along with the usual burro races and bicycle races. It took a little persuasion, we even agreed to race without the cash prize, if necessary, but they finally put up two or three dollars and said, "Well, go ahead."

We had to make our own coasters out of buggy wheels (baby buggy wheels) whatever lumber we could scrounge up, and used a little driving system, a little wheel, for what's now known as a steering wheel on automobiles.

And we raced from the top of Brougher Hill right down near the bank building, the main intersection of Tonopah we might call it, on the main street. And other than the few of us who were participants, why there wasn't too much interest in the coaster race. Years later, all of us are amused at the national attention that the Soapbox Derby receives. And we rather think that possibly the first version of the Soapbox Derby was held in Tonopah, promoted by ourselves. And, incidentally, Milo won the race in what he called his "Darko Special." I think the clunker I was drivin', I called a "Dusenburg," but I was somewhat behind Milo when he reached the bottom of the hill.

Skipping from those very early years, the 1920s, to the "high school era," you might call it, this same close-knit group stayed pretty well together, often kidded and jived by others. We had Milo, the Serb (Serbian, now called "Yugoslavian" which not all of them appreciate—the title of Yugoslavian—as the proud Serbian and Montenegrin heritage, actually Milo was Montenegrin). Leon's parents were French Jews; Douglass the Scotsman; and McCloskey the Irishman. We had quite a small united nations group there. [Chuckling] Very close-knit as I say. And, incidentally, Leon got the name "Pinky" because he had the brightest red hair, freckled face for a Jewish boy that you ever wanted to see. His father, incidentally, had a jewelry shop in Tonopah.

At high school level, we seemed to all tend toward printing or writing, and—not Douglass, he was more the business head and that's why he's the millionaire in Reno today, I guess. But Milo and Pinky caught on at the *Tonopah Times*, contributing stories from the high school, and I, already having worked at the *Bonanza* [as] paper seller, paper carrier, and apprentice printer was doing the high school news writing for the *Bonanzas* which developed a real sharp rivalry, although

never interfering with our friendship. And Pinky even did some hand press feeding, for which he'd get paid by the piecework down at the *Times*. While I stayed with paperwork, Pinky, by his very ethnic background, I guess, he became a rather successful businessman, or a merchant. Milo went into the field of pharmacy, and worked in the old McCulloch drugstore on Commercial Row, and Clyde Cannan, later was the pharmacist at St. Mary's hospital in Reno, and then for many years until his recent retirement was state representative for Abbott Laboratories. And in his retirement, he's devoting most of his time, as I say, to the work of the Masonic lodge and recently was honored for that with their highest degree, the honorary thirty-third.

At that point, I'd like to stop for the moment, light my pipe, before we get into this era of mixin' my early days around the Bonanza office with my big nose. I had good hearing in those days, and the relation of those two to some of the political chicanery or amusing events of the period, and particularly centering around Bill Booth and the Tonopah Bonanza.

I have mentioned some about the operations we had while in high school, and I might say at that time, not only were we gearing our sights towards business, trade or profession, but we also became "embryo politicians," you might call it or I might call it, at that time, because I don't know whether "inherent" is the proper word, but it certainly was very well impressed upon all of us that very few would have the opportunity to go to college, living in an isolated mining camp distant from the university (Reno was the nearest), and all of us living, what might be termed "on the other side of the tracks" with only very minimum income. In fact, by the present day official government standards, I doubt if we could qualify for the poverty level because we'd be so far below it; we would be

probably written off, and that's a very honest statement and can be verified in any way. Well, we just didn't have any money. I'll touch for a moment on that '21 mine strike.

NOTES ON POLITICS AND NEWSPAPERS

We usually had to trade at the company store, as it was called, where the prices averaged about ten percent higher than the privately owned stores, and we used the coupon books. My two older brothers worked in the mines. My dad for a while there would draw—they'd have to go to the office and draw books in advance of their pay, that was deducted from their pay. So we were more or less a "captive clientele," I guess you might call it—"customers" is a better word.

When the strike came on, we were chopped off at the company store, and the little private stores could not extend additional credit, we did have some rather rough times in the food line. I remember my mother sendin' me here or there to try to borrow two dollars at a time to meet certain payments or buy certain things that we could not get on credit at the other stores.

And it was the going menu that we had meat in the house one day a week, and that was on Sunday, and usually round steak, because in those days, round steak was the cheapest; I couldn't believe when round steak became a higher priced piece of meat! Mom had six or more, maybe, recipes to camouflage that round steak so that it was different each time. Even after we became, not more affluent, but a little more solvent, all of us working and contributing to the family larder, whatever the proper word is without bein' dramatic about it, we would have on Sunday roast pork or roast beef, and on other days of the week, stew and various dishes, but never the higher priced meat and

not every day of the week. And to this day I do not eat meat seven days a week. I just never developed it, and I might add to this day, I cannot eat a full steak. We just never had steak.

In fact, I was living in Hawthorne in 1930 when I first learned that there was such a thing as an individual steak. When I was invited by a friend in Hawthorne, Hank Barlow, one Sunday (we were out swimming at Walker Lake), and he said, "Well, let's go in town and have a steak."

And I said, "A steak?"

And he said, "Yes."

An' I said, "Who are we gonna get to eat it with us?"

And he said, "What are you talking about?"

An' I said, "The two of us can't put away a steak."

And he used some expression like, "Are you some kind of freak or something?"

So then I was very embarrassed to hear—the editor of the newspaper, in fact; Bill Booth was in California—but here I am, the knowledgeable newspaper man an' all and didn't even know there was such a thing as an individual steak. We went to the old Nevada Club, since torn down, and Hank had to order for me, and I think it was a rib steak, ordered one for himself and one for myself.

When I saw all that meat in front of me, I didn't know whether to walk out or what. And I said, "Hank, there has to be something wrong." Now bear in mind, the price of the steak dinner was only seventy-five cents, so it wasn't a great cash investment. But Hank (much larger than myself, a real hulk of a man—physical specimen), he topped off that steak so rapidly, while I was nibbling and chewing away on mine. His question to me was, "Is there something wrong with your steak?"

And I says, "Yes."

An' he says, "What's that?"

I said, "There's too damn much of it!"

And Hank had to finish the steak for me [laughter], so I wouldn't have to explain to the cook why I hadn't eaten all the steak.

And that has followed me through the years. My older daughter would give you the impression that she was weaned on steak, always wants to sit close to me whenever we do have steaks. She's not at home now, but while she was growing up here in Hawthorne and living at home, when we did have steak, she had first claim on the steak that I didn't finish. And to this day at Lions Club in Hawthorne (where Joe Viani serves a terrific steak dinner to the Lions at a very nominal price—good steak), that is the point of my popularity in seating arrangement because the heavy steak eaters always want to sit close; they know they're gonna have at least seconds in part.

So it's just a little aside about the times and the conditions and the effect it has in later life; I strayed from the part about we all geared our direction on how we were going to make a living when we got out of high school. In fact, those of us who could get through high school considered ourselves fortunate because many, many did not make it. There was a rule, school policy and all at that time, that you had to graduate from the eighth grade in order to enter high school. And if you failed in the eighth grade the first year, you were given one more try at it. If you didn't make it the second year and were not ready for high school, they just considered you too big or too old for the rest of the kids in the class, so they suggested you go out to try to find some work.

The work in those days was largely down in the mines, or "down the hole" as we called it. And that was the greatest disciplinary factor I can ever recall in our school system, much more so than the ruler or the yardstick—and they did use them in those days; the Supreme

Court had not gotten around to consider that cruel and unusual punishment, particularly with school kids. So there was a lot of built-in discipline that we had to get our studies, difficult as they were for most of us from these varied national or ethnic backgrounds that we welded and melded together very well. Some leaning more, you might say, to the literary side, some to the commercial.

They had very good commercial sources, and also then "the science," they used to term it, the science side of their curriculum. They had those three: the literary, the science and all. And of course your math—heavy on math and sciences. But the science side is largely preparatory for college level, but if not, why you had a foundation—fellas could become practical engineers, carpenter foremen, work on up if they could. There was very, very good training at Tonopah high school.

I'm proud as anything that I was able to get my diploma from that school. And as stated, most of us did not go on to college, only the few whose folks had the wherewithal and were able to make it to the university. So the next step was trying to build ourselves into, as I'd said before, a profession, trade of some kind. With most of us it was a trade or a craft, and that's why I, largely, stayed with the newspaper work from the time I was eleven because I figured that's what I *could* do and what I *wanted* to do. And it also could possibly insure me a paycheck—if there was any money in the *Bonanza's* bank account at the time, because not every payday meant that we were to be paid, only when there was money in the bank account.

To verify that, I'll give you a little example of how it worked. When the *Bonanza* account was so low that it could not even meet the payroll and go for a week or maybe ten days late on being paid, then the real bright light in the sky was some mining company that

had assessed its stockholders—and most of them were doing it all the time—would have to publish the delinquent notice, which in many instances was larger than the county's delinquent tax list is today in our county. Well, that was a great source of revenue for the paper. Well, the minute the publication started, the newspaper—Bill Booth would call the bank. It was all transacted by phone; he would call the bank and tell them the situation, and they would ask him to stop by, and then he would give an assignment on the payment for that publication to the bank, then the bank would advance the money into his account so he could meet the payroll. So that was quite a common practice, particularly on the *Bonanza* side. In later years I talked to Frank Garside; he said he did the same thing.

Two daily papers printed six days a week, and in the late twenties, both starving to death. But before we get into that—the merger of the *Times* and *Bonanza*—I'm rolling back a few years now. Because of my experience of sweeping out the *Bonanza* office, I used to go to work at six o'clock in the morning; had to sweep all the old wood floors, one room concrete, a concrete hallway; light the gas melting pot under one linotype because it took two hours to melt the lead; and then at seven o'clock turn on the electric pot on the other machine, which was a ridiculous way to have a shop set up, but that's the way it was—one burning electricity, the other gasoline—always on the fear that the power'd go off, and the one machine would be "kept alive," so to speak, to set type. But the thing I always questioned, and so did the printers, of old Bill Booth, "Well, what good'll it do to set the type if we can't turn the press?" The press ran on electricity [chuckling].

Most of my early political and government experience, oh, "mini-Watergate" (call it what you wish) I learned while sweeping

floors. It gave me an excellent opportunity to commingle, as it were, with the politician big shots who were havin' an argument, or a conference, or a big whispering session. And on the days that some of those fellas would gather early in the morning, between seven and eight, to have one of their conferences, which they usually did, it took me quite a little longer to sweep the same area of floor than it did when no one was around [laughter]. And I mention the six to eight [o'clock] hours because then I'd rush home, take off my old overalls, put on some clean ones and rush right to school. We had to be to school at eight-fifteen. I was forever gettin' zinged for bein' late, took a lot of punishment for bein' tardy, but it was a pretty tight fit to get from the *Bonanza* office to my house and then over to the school in those fifteen minutes.

One of the amusing incidents (it's amusing to me, rather strange setting) was following the death of President Warren G. Harding. Bill Booth, the owner and editor as he called himself (he was the owner, but never was a writer) had hanging over his rolltop desk a huge framed picture of Warren G. Harding, and that was his pride and joy as he would look up. Well, when the good President "checked out" in San Francisco, I believe it was, on one of his western trips, Tonopah had to be just as important as Washington D.C. or any other location in the United States by having memorial services for the late President.

It was planned for two o'clock in the afternoon in the old auditorium, just across the street from the *Bonanza* office. All the arrangements were made the day before, continued into the day of the services. A lot of wrangling, difference of opinion, was expressed; the consumption, we'd say, of the good, first class whiskey they had during those Prohibition days might have risen a little bit above the average for the day. The auditorium

was decorated with black streamers. They had a tripod or easel, or whatever it's called on the stage, and there was the picture that Bill Booth had allowed them to take down from his wall and use, in the absence of the casket or the body itself; plans made for several speakers to get up and deliver their eulogies. But somewhere before two o'clock, the committee leaders, the staunch state Republicans became a bit wobbly, weaving and bobbing a bit. Tempers began to get shorter, and—what prompted the final argument, I do not know because I was workin' in the *Bonanza* office, and they were all over at the auditorium—but we saw our good leader, Bill Booth, almost fall on his face coming in the front door of the *Bonanza*, carryin' this huge picture, a little uncertain of foot, and unleash a tirade against those so-and-so's that were running the show. He refused to allow 'em to use his—Harding's photograph. Back it went up on the wall. So they buried Warren G. Harding in Tonopah without benefit of his portrait bein' present. That was only one of the many arguments that Booth was to have with his other two Republican cronies who were on this act, Mark Bradshaw, who later became almost a perpetual chairman of the Republican central committee, and Arthur H. Keenan, not sure of the "H", but Arthur Keenan I know.

Keenan had been named postmaster in Tonopah through the influence of the Republicans (it was then a political plum), but served only four years because when he came up for reappointment, Senator Key Pittman rose on the floor of the United States Senate to announce that the nominee was "personally obnoxious" to him. And that was an unbending rule of the Senate regardless of the party in power, if anyone had offended one of the select club to an extent that he was when Keenan was terminated. As I recall, C. C. Boak was then chosen to succeed him.

But Booth wrote strong editorials, or would at least have his deskman, as we called him, who was virtually the editor of the paper, "do the job" on Key Pittman over this. You'll find it in the files of the old *Tonopah Bonanza*. But as close as Booth and Keenan were, the amusing thing; when we came to work one morning, I noticed a big rock inside the front door; I couldn't figure out from whence it came—rather heavy one, too. At that time the deskman, the real editor of the *Bonanza*, was a man named Matt Farrell, one of the finest newspapermen ever to serve in Nevada (I'll touch on him later), and when he came to work, he asked me what the rock was. I said I did not know. Well, Booth came staggerin' out in his old nightgown—he always wore a nightgown; it was kind of the slit side in the leg like the gals used in later years, you know, for the kind of just a little bit sexy, dressy deal where they'd have the slit up the side of the leg. Booth roamed around all over the office in the old nightgown. He came out and he wasn't completely sober yet; he said, "Do you know what that s-of-a-b Art Keenan did to me after all I've done for him, the friends we've been?" We said no. Well, they were down in one of the bars, or "joints" they were called then (Prohibition was in effect) and the two of them had gotten into an argument and they went outside to settle it, just as Booth and Judge John A. Sanders had done some years before. And Booth said he couldn't remember whether he hit Keenan or missed him, but the next thing that Keenan had picked up that rock and threw it at him. An' he was cuttin' him off his list for life.

Well, Matt Farrell listened as patiently as an employee can, but you could see tears comin' to his eyes, not from sympathy, but he just burst out laughing in the worst way, and had to hold it, and as soon as Booth left, I thought that Man Farrell was gonna fall off the chair. He had a little roly-poly belly for a short man and he was just shakin' on that

chair, and he laughed and cried all day long. And he walked over and he tried to pick up the rock, and he called me over and asked me to try to pick it up [laughter]. and different people around town, if they'd see Art Keenan, then they'd say, "Hey Art, you want to have a rock throwing contest?"

And he'd say, "Aw—forget it, the old so-and-so lied. I didn't throw any rock at him."

Whatever the beef was, I don't know [laughter]. Whether any rock ever moved other than the one Booth carried into the *Bonanza* office I don't know. But it was only a matter of days and Booth and Keenan had kissed and made up [laughter].

He went through one of the same sessions with Mark Bradshaw. They were having a money-raising event in Tonopah to grade and terrace the old dirt school grounds in front of the school on the hill, because once you stepped out of the school on a day when there was lots of snow or ice on the front steps, if a kid happened to be running and then slipped, why he wouldn't stop until he reached about three blocks below him straight down the hill. And so a lot of civic-minded citizens (not all parents, but parents and everyone) put on a great project to terrace; they'd have to do it by terrace because it was such a steep hill. They'd level and terrace and come down (we had a three level terrace there at the school) and then fence it in, so if some kid did start rollin' down the hill, why, the fence'd catch him. And it was a great, community-wide event. As I recall, I think maybe the Rotary Club was the prime mover of it because they had just recently been organized in Tonopah.

There was a three-day carnival. Oh, any number of events going on, and the carnival, shows inside the auditorium. One play the Rotary put on, kind of a skit. We didn't get the full impact, but they had a little sketch

about Warren V. Richardson stopping the train at Santa Barbara and saying he'd have to get on another southbound train, because he just remembered that he'd left his wife in Los Angeles. And whether true or not, I do not know. Some say it was a very true story about Warren [chuckle] that was portrayed. I can still remember that as a little kid 'cause we were askin' questions: "What is this all about? Did the man actually do that? Did he get on the train?" And I'm sure he did, but I can't prove it.

And the big climax of the three-day carnival and money-raising events and selling the candy and everything, was the award of the Chrysler car, and this was to be done publicly down in the center of town. As I previously mentioned, on the one corner was the bank building, across the street was the old St. Pierre bootery, then the Mizpah Hotel, and then Southworth's store; and in the center of the street, they had an elevated platform where all the orators would perform on the Fourth of July and the like. Automobiles had to drive around it, going in either direction; they had to swing in around that big platform in the center of that narrow main street in Tonopah, and that's where the drawing would be held. They had a big barrel up there with all the tickets. People were buyin' chances on this automobile award for three weeks or more that the big fund-raising drive had been on. And Mark Bradshaw, who was in charge of that part of the program, had a little difficulty getting up the steps that evening; it was toward dusk that they were having it. And decided he would do the drawing himself. Well, he fumbled around. I think there was a third or second prize, I'm not certain of that, but I know the Chrysler car was the first prize. He fumbled around in the barrel, came out with the ticket and said, "Well, here is the winner." But he held it clenched in his fist for a while and said, "I bet ya can't guess who it is Who do you think it is?" He was shoutin' this way.

And the crowd says, “Come on Mark, tell us, who won the car?”

And he had his hand goin’ around this way [waves closed fist], and I don’t believe the man ever put it back in the barrel or anything else like this—like some would say—not this and that. When he opened his fist and read off the number of the ticket, the winner was Albert Silver, Mark Bradshaw’s mining engineer partner [chuckling]. They had a joint venture reclaiming gold from the tailings at the Goldfield mill at the time.

Well, there was more rumblin’ and more grumblin’, more accusations tossed around that night, and Mark was not the most popular man in town. Albert Silver was very embarrassed with his partner who’d drawn his name from the barrel, instead of havin’ some young queen or somebody do it [chuckling], why that’s the way to handle it.

Well, this struck Bill Booth as bein’ something far worse than Watergate was viewed in later years. He didn’t write an editorial; he wrote what was alleged to be a news story and put it on the front page of the *Bonanza* the next day, tellin’ how long he’d known Mark Bradshaw, how long he’d been associated with him, and so on, and he’d come to the conclusion that he was anything but a gentleman, honest, or knew how to conduct the drawing. Paper came out in the evening. The next day Bradshaw and Booth were in there, they were arguin’ at first. They left to go get a drink or two; they came back and held up the paper. Booth had to write a correction and a retraction about what he’d said about Mark Bradshaw. The next day—you check the files of the *Bonanza*, I can’t recall every detail—but Booth, in effect, said that Mark Bradshaw was a gentleman, a scholar, and would never do a dishonest thing! It was the greatest twenty-four hour reversal I’ve ever seen in a newspaper [laughter].

That was the time that Matt Farrell said to me, he said, “Let me tell ya one thing,” he said [much laughter], tears comin’ out of his eyes and cryin’, he said, “remember if ever you get in trouble writing something, and they threaten you with a libel suit, or do file one, be careful in your retraction or apology as the law requires because,” he said, “Bill Booth has just done what they claim an old newspaperman did years and years before.

And I said, “What is that, Matt?”

And he said, “Well, this fella accused one of his neighbors, as Bill has accused Mark, of not havin’ the manners of a pig.” And he said, “The object of the scathing statement became furious, immediately contacted an attorney, so the editor contacted his attorney. He [the editor] said, ‘Is there anything to this? Can he sue me for libel?’

‘He certainly can,’ he [the attorney] said. “The first thing you want to do is make a retraction, an apology. It might give us something to go on.”

So in the next issue that old-time editor, mythical or otherwise published what he called a retraction—apology. He said that in the preceding day he’d stated that, we’ll say “John Jones,” object of this attack, “did not have the manners of a pig.” He says upon further inquiry, an’ with the aid of additional information, he learned that John Jones *does* have the manners of a pig. [Chuckling] And his attorney told him he didn’t think that was quite right. The closest actual experience I’ve had (seeing it in print, seeing it happen) was the Eradshaw-Booth, one of their many wrangles.

During those same, I’ll call ‘em wonderful years, there was more happenin’, I’d say, there in Tonopah, Nevada between 1919 and 1929 than any other community in the state of Nevada, or in many states could say, in which the entire community, in one way or another, would become interested.

I mentioned the Fourth of July parade; it was always the greatest event of the year in Tonopah. (The next greatest event, as I stated, was all in Tonopah goin' to Reno for the basketball tournament.) They would award prizes for so-called "floats." There weren't very many, an' very little bunting and red, white, and blue paper on an automobile and so on, would be entered in the parade.

Well, one year the *Tonopah Times* won first place among the business floats. It caused Bill Booth to just about go out of his mind. He was furious at the judges, committee, and everything else. And the *Times* won it in this way: Garside had been the object of Booth's jabs about the "moonshine sheet down the street." The *Times* was an early morning paper, would go to press about one or two in the morning and be distributed at the homes, the same as early morning papers are today; whereas, the *Bonanza* was an afternoon paper. And that constant reference to the "moonshine sheet down the street" gave Frank Garside, or someone on his staff, a splendid idea for entering a business float in the Fourth of July parade.

It was Garside's old tan, or "brindle" color, as I called it—colored Cadillac, an open touring car. And he had elevated on the back seat of that Cadillac in the parade, an actual bonafide still, with coil and all leading down to an elevated, like whiskey jug. And Frank and Mrs. Garside in the front seat, as I remember, I believe she was with him; I think the two children, Virginia Germain and Sherwin Garside, living in Las Vegas, in the back seat. It set up such a roar that it was a winner by acclamation in everybody's mind but Bill Booth's. And when he heard the results, it just wasn't safe to go to work for a day or so! [Laughter] He couldn't understand.

He said, "It's ridiculous—" (words to this effect); he'd say, "It's a ridiculous thing to call

a float, or give a prize to. On top of that," he says, "he stole the idea from me.

I believe that was the one capper that got us all laughing again [laughter].

"He stole the idea from me!" Simply because Booth had dubbed it—he thought in a rather nasty reference—well, just putting Garside down was what he was doing to him by referring to it as "the moonshine sheet down the street."

SPRINGMEYER LIBEL TRIAL

Let me just close out on Tonopah, if I can at this point. One highlight was the libel suit filed by George Springmeyer, prominent Reno attorney, prominent Bull Mooser, against the Tonopah *Bonanza*. That, I believe, must have been about '27 because it was the result of an editorial that appeared in the *Bonanza* during the heated primary campaign for U.S. Senate in 1926, and which Springmeyer while not a candidate, was in the opposite camp from Senator Tasker Oddie. The heading of the editorial—I wish I had kept a copy; I do not have, but the files—as I recall, was "The Unspiked Rail is Loose Again." This is one of the few that Booth wrote himself, and overruled Matt Farrell's efforts to clean it up a little.

As I recall, the key libelous phrase, or statement, or reference, said, in effect, that alongside of George Springmeyer, Benedict Arnold was a gentleman, or words to that effect—or was it patriot? I believe it was an absolute and clear out case of libel. I think Matt Farrell figured the same. Don't know how you could ever beat it in court in those days. Later liberal courts that we have today, unfortunately, have made it much easier for newspapers to actually libel people in public life and not be punished for it. And it wasn't that way back in the twenties.

The case was heard in Tonopah in district court. I'm certain that Frank T. Dunn was still judge then. He'd defeated Averill in '22—yes, I believe it was still Frank Dunn. But he had to disqualify himself, and they brought in a judge from Las Vegas, Judge William B. Orr, to preside at the trial. Judge Orr is well known by older residents of Nevada, later served on the Nevada State Supreme Court and the Federal District Court of Appeals. He was the presiding judge, very capable and competent man; although in this case if he'd had some experience as a ringmaster in a circus, it would have aided him over and above his legal training.

Sardis Summerfield represented George Springmeyer, and Booth was defended by James T. Boyd. As I said a moment ago, really there was no defense against the libel, so Jim Boyd had to use the defense that they always tell them in law school, that if the facts are on your side, argue the facts; if the law is on your side, argue the law; if neither is on your side, why, wave the flag! An' Jim Boyd did a professional job of that.

Of course, by the time the jury selection had been completed, it was a foregone conclusion that Springmeyer had lost the case, but still they had to go through the little routine and ritual [chuckling] hearing the evidence, reading, testifying, and it largely centered around Springmeyer's character. Of course, you have to show that your character's been damaged, character, reputation, possibly earnings, and all those things involved. So, when I say foregone conclusion, I recall twice that Judge Orr had to admonish two members of the jury to remain awake during the takin' of testimony [laughter]. One of them drew attention by heavy snoring [laughter].

But when the issue of Springmeyer's good character and all was presented by

"corroborating witnesses," so to speak, one of the witnesses was another district judge, J. Emmet Walsh, of what then was the seventh district. He lived in Goldfield, and his district included Esmeralda and Mineral—Nye was a separate district.

Another of Springmeyer's character witnesses was prominent attorney William D. Hatton, later district judge for many years until the time of his retirement, in the fifth district. They both attested to George Springmeyer's excellent reputation for honesty, veracity and integrity. James T. Boyd, on questioning for the defense, spent a lot of prime time asking each of the learned attorneys in service, to define and explain the difference between honesty, integrity and veracity.

We were sittin' in the court room, as the civic class of the high school, and we thought it was an excellent lesson [chuckling] in language and connotation of words. An' frankly, it was amusing because you get three attorneys together—two or three or even more—ask each one to give you a definition of honesty, integrity, and veracity, and you'll be surprised at the varied answers you receive [chuckling]!

Well, it was just a smoke screen to throw it off, you know, for the jury's benefit, that here are these two prominent attorneys—one a judge—they don't even agree on what the words mean!

And then they got Springmeyer on the stand—his turn, Boyd's turn—and during the affirmative side, plaintiff's own case, they'd refer to Springmeyer as loyal and faithful in service to his country at the time of war, serving overseas. And I can still see James T. Boyd with those long, bony fingers pointin' and shakin' as he would do, with a very pronounced nose (and a good deal of the alcoholic red to the veins as you would

recognize), and pointin' and rattling that finger like a saber, "Mr. Springmeyer, you testified as to your service in country and so on." And "Mr. Springmeyer, you were an officer in the army?"

"Yes "

"Mr. Springmeyer, were you ever wounded in action?"

"No, sir.

"Now think, think hard, Mr. Springmeyer, are you absolutely certain that you never sustained any kind of bullet mark or wound of any kind in your back?" (The implication being he was goin' the other way.)

And the jury perked up at that point. Now they had a little doubt in their minds. Whatever other testimony was offered was just extraneous, so when they finally submitted the case to the jury, the jury came back, awarded Springmeyer nothing. It was over with, unlike the earlier libel suit which, before my time, Judge Sanders had brought against Bill Booth. And that I do not know the details of. One would have to go into the files of the *Bonanza* and the *Times* to find that, and that was 1916, just sixty years ago. They had Booth in jail that time. I think that was filed under the criminal libel charge. I'm certain that Springmeyer's was civil, although it might have been criminal.

The big problem and the real sweat around the Bonanza office was, that the ones that were hurt the most by the trial were the employees. Each day the jury had to be paid before the trial would start, that is, the money had to be deposited with the county clerk of the court by Booth who, had requested it, to be refunded if he won the case, as I understand it. Nevertheless, I know he had to put up the money—\$48 a day. The jurors drew four dollars a day, and it went past a week, I believe—a full week and maybe into the second. Because now all the money

in the payroll account was goin' to pay—it was a payroll account all right—but to pay jurors, not the printers or anybody workin' around the Bonanza office. And it got Booth so far behind that I know my former partner, now deceased, Scoop Connors, he had five weeks coming. He financed most of the jury for Booth by not drawing his pay. But he made the mistake; on two or three of them, the paychecks were already issued, so he would endorse them and then turn 'em back to Booth. And Booth would take them up and leave them with the clerk, negotiable checks, or hopefully so. But then they got in an argument over how many checks he had endorsed over to him or how much money he had put up [laughter], and they had quite a time over that I recall—the financing of the famous Springmeyer versus Booth trial.

Okay, I think I'll open this round, as usual, with something I forgot. Along about this time of all the political excitement that I was pokin' my nose into, or at least my ears, there were a few other interesting sidelights—and if I can stray from the political side at this point—such as Death Valley Scotty. Saw him several times. He would come in the *Bonanza* office, flamboyant, poorly dressed—his old khaki trousers, moderately clean shirt, sometimes suspenders, sometimes just a belt, sometimes both. But the one day that I recall vividly, when he was in one of his usual show-off performances, he walked in and he wanted to show Matt Farrell he was up for a good party and he could afford it. And then in front of all in the office, he unbuckled his belt, unbuttoned his trousers part way—didn't have zippers in those days—reached in, took out from one side three safety pins, apparently that he'd opened, laid them on the desk. By removing the three safety pins from what appeared to be the upper part of his pocket, then, he reached in his pocket

and brought out five one-thousand dollar bills and laid 'em on the desk. And that was probably the most money I had ever seen at one time, at least owned by an individual, but it was the first time I had ever seen a thousand-dollar bill. And I've seen none since in my life, unless they're on display in some gaming club in Nevada [chuckle]. But that's just one little reference I want to make to Death Valley Scotty because he's been worked to death by the authors, both those who deal in fact and those who deal in fiction.

MY EARLY CAREER AS A NEWSPAPERMAN IN TONOPAH

In 1929—here again, if I seem to more or less idolize this man Matt Farrell, then I’ve accomplished my purpose, because I did; even though he’s now deceased, I do. He was one of the sharpest, most observing and all-seeing newspaper reporters and writers that I have ever known. He came of English parentage out of New Jersey. His mother, being very domineering (father died) and never allowin’ the kids to get too far—Matt or his sister—allowed him to work the New York Stock Exchange as a call boy (or simple title of a call boy; they have of runners, up and down the platforms, takin’ orders) for just a year or so. He learned considerably about it, but he had a flair for writing and he came out to Goldfield, Nevada and he worked under the distinguished Dave Williamson, who later for years was the editorial writer for the *Reno Evening Gazette*. And having worked with Williamson, and, I think, the old man Richey—W. C. Richey, an expert mining writer. In those days they more or less specialized in their field, mining; some of ’em knew something about stocks, some

knew something about sports—well, sports was subordinate then; today everybody’s a sports writer, and no one knows anything about writin’ a mining story.

Matt would talk frequently in the summer of ’29—that was the year that I finished high school, now workin’ full time. My pay had been raised from twelve dollars to twenty dollars a week, and that was for six days a week until seven o’clock on Saturday night. And Matt showed great concern; he was a great observer of the trend of the stock market and writing up, editing a story as it came over the Western Union wire in those days. We had a “pony wire” system, as they called it. Three times a day, a lengthy day press rate telegram would come in with all the different news items, all in capital letters, and he would have to break them down fast, rewrite them, put the heads on.

And I recall late in summer that Matt gave dire warnings that the country was heading for—his actual words were, “It’s ridin’ for a fall.” He always said, “It’s ridin’ for a fall.” He said, “The market is bad, they’re borrowing;

they're allowin' too much purchase on margin." He says, "It's gotten way out of hand." And he spoke of the discount rate; he mumbled to himself. An' he used such expressions as, "It's got to blow." And he became so nervous in seem' the continental drop in the price of silver, he could foresee that Tonopah was in trouble. He started writin' letters, looking for a job elsewhere.

Well, in September he and Booth had a big argument, and Booth wanted to cut his pay. And he said, "No, I've already applied for some jobs." Booth was on the ropes then, and Matt stayed around Tonopah till some of these bites that he had out would get in, and was still there when the Black Tuesday, I believe it was they called it, of October of '29—the crash hit. And then everyone was just about in panic, anyone knowin' anything about stock market. Probably the coolest man in town was the little worry-wart who'd been telling everybody it was going to happen. He'd light a cigarette and he said, "Well, I didn't know *when* it was going to come." He says, "I wished it coulda held off till after Christmas, but it's here." And in that cool, collected way of his, why, would we bid goodbye. He left Tonopah to go to Borger, Texas, take a job on the paper there.

But prior to his leaving, things were so shaky even before the market itself crashed, actually Tonopah preceded the national crash. Silver'd reached the point where this mine or that mine'd be closing. And they began to negotiate to sell the *Bonanza* to the *Times*. Booth and Garside didn't speak to each other, but I remember Captain Walter Rowson was kind of the middle man—the attorney. They both had confidence in him, and he would do a lot of the negotiatin'. Grant Crumley, I can remember comin' in the office and whisperin' to Booth about this term or that term; he was workin' it.

So from the first of September until the *Bonanza-Times* merger was consummated in November that year, I had to cover the desk—and even a few days before I reached eighteen years of age—and I'm tryin' to write the heads for the stories and untangle the capital-letter Associated Press stuff, writin' local stories, usin' canned editorials, or anything I could clip from another Nevada paper. But fortunately for those few weeks that I had it, I could always go to Matt's house if he were home, or see him down the street and ask for advice and suggestions which he was so good about covering for me, a few things. And Booth became quite embittered at Matt for not waitin' until Booth terminated him. Matt terminated himself. In fact, at the time Booth had not paid Matt in full. Matt had three or four weeks wages comin'; he was waitin' around for that. And he knew about the impending sale and he wanted to have some money to travel on.

Ironically, when the merger of the *Times* and the *Bonanza* took place, and many people praised Bill Booth for the wonderful editorial "Mark 30"—signing off after 29 years at the helm of the *Bonanza* in Tonopah, relating just a few of his experiences, the highlights, the feeling of advancing age and the economy of the area; and many people thought it masterful, probably one of the best editorials that Booth had ever written. They couldn't understand that he could be that humble, that he could be so objective in stating why he was makin' the sale. And I don't know whether Bill Booth saw the editorial before it went to the typesetter. Matt did show him a proof of it because Matt came back in the office for the one and only time since he'd left early in September and wrote Bill Booth's editorial for him. And the great editorial that was credited to Bill Booth was written by Matt Farrell.

Incidentally, Matt, after leaving Borger, Texas, went on to Carlsbad, New Mexico where he worked for a number of years, then in the middle thirties [he] returned to Nevada to become the editorial writer for the *Reno Evening Gazette*, replacing Dave Williamson whom he had replaced on the old *Goldfield Tribune* [chuckling] in Goldfield, Nevada, many many years before.

One little incident—didn't bother me at the time, later on I thought it was rather an unfair deal—was Booth made me work one Sunday, or told me he wanted me to come in right after church. Be there at 10 o'clock, there'd be a man here to go through and check some of the equipment. And he kept me somewhat in the dark, and I was there a little before ten and opened the door, and just sat there reading a paper or something in the front office. Right about ten in walked Frank Garside, the owner of the *Tonopah Times*, and he called me by name. We'd always had a friendly relationship, although Booth would have nothing to do with anybody connected with the *Times*.

And he said, "Did Mr. Booth tell you that you are to take me through the shop, Jack?"

I said, "He didn't tell me who it was, Mr. Garside, but he said someone wanted to go through."

He said, "Yes, I'm going to take an inventory on all of the equipment."

Now up until that point, Booth hadn't even told me that he was sellin' the paper, and I'm takin' his competitor through inventorying it.

Well we checked out everything in the shop. Prior to him gettin' there, I didn't realize, but I noticed where the cases of type had seemed to be missing, and Garside asked me. I said, "Well they got more racks here, I guess, than they got type for it."

I didn't want to get in the middle of it. Booth had taken a number of cases of type

that he wanted to bring to Hawthorne, had [chuckle] them buried in the garage or somewhere, and Garside caught on right away and rather laughed.

He said, "Well, looks like the old boy has got some favorite type he's gonna take with him."

I said, "I don't know." I had to cover here and cover there.

In later years, after Garside was in the business in Las Vegas and retired, we laughed about that famous Sunday morning that I, at eighteen, and he, Booth's competitor, tryin' to inventory Booth's newspaper plant. But it was a case then, the inventory didn't amount to that much. It was a matter of gettin' one or the other of the papers out of town or they'd both die. They were both starvin' to death at the time. But that was one of the many wild missions that Hill Booth sent me on! But I always prided myself in later years on the fine relationship I had with the Garside family because I would never agree to—and neither would Mart Farrell, none of the other crew—would accept his bitterness toward Garside simply because he was a competitor. And that was about the fold-up when the move started toward Hawthorne.

In 1928, Booth started the *Hawthorne News*, deciding that Hawthorne would be the new boom. Things were not going too well in Tonopah for either the *Times* or *Bonanza*, but Garside had already made a move to Las Vegas and bought the weekly *Las Vegas Review*; and he's tryin' to hold on in Tonopah with a six-day-a-week daily paper. An' even though it came out six times a week, it was far more weekly than some of the weeklies are! And we started printing the *Hawthorne News* in Tonopah. I say "we"—I used to get some heads whenever they were set by hand, make up some of the pages, and this was great. We

had a new step-child in the *Bonanza* office, the *Hawthorne News*.

Well, little did we realize it was only about a year left for the *Bonanza*. And it was in 1929 that the *Bonanza* folded, folded in this way—it was purchased by Frank Garside of the *Times*. And that was the end of the earliest paper in Tonopah, the *Tonopah Bonanza* in '29.

I was making twenty dollars a week then. And some weeks I'd get paid on time, some two or three days late, even at twenty dollars a week. [A] man later to be my partner, the back shop foreman and pressman, Scoop [J. W.] Connors, he hadn't been paid for several weeks, 'n Matt hadn't been paid for several weeks, so Booth had to let Matt go. And so from September until November, when the deal was consummated for the *Times* to take over the *Bonanza*, and I had to write the heads, edit the AP copy that came in three times a day on the pony wire as we called it (over Western Union), try to clip something out of exchanges, and find enough to fill the damn paper! And I'd go to work about six in the morning [chuckling]; and if I made it home at six at night, I was doin' well because frankly I was scared, with no warning or no real adequate training, no formal education in the field.

[I] always have been thankful that I had the privilege and pleasure and the luck to have Matt Farrell as like a private tutor. He was a man who had not finished college himself, but to use an old expression of my grandmother's, he could give cards and spades to most of the English teachers and turn them around and see if they could tell a hanging participle from a dangling participle. He was almost a fanatic on good grammar, proper use, spelling had be meticulous; everything, he would check. So that thanks to Matt Farrell, I was able to hang on, and he was in town.

But that was the quick and sudden death of the *Bonanza*. And, I don't know what

would have happened if the negotiations for the purchase of the two papers (the purchase of the *Bonanza* by the *Times*) had extended another three months, because about three months later those mines were closing left and right; and Garside found he had one sick paper—his own—on his hands, and now he'd purchased another one and tried to merge them. It was quite a struggle for Garside to keep the one going then.

Well, to get on with the story, we continued printin' the *Hawthorne News* in Tonopah until December. Even though Garside had purchased the *Bonanza*, why, there was an agreement there that one machine would be kept hot—the linotype I'm speakin' of—the one machine and the press, and we'd run off the *Hawthorne News* in Tonopah in the *Bonanza* plant, and finally made the big move in December of 1929. In between issues [we] moved a press and a linotype, two job presses—one of which fell off a truck by Kinkead and was wrecked—and a lot of hand type. And this was some material that Booth had retained from the *Tonopah Bonanza*, and then some out of the *Tonopah Miner* which he had purchased after Garside bought the *Bonanza*. He purchased equipment out of the defunct *Tonopah Miner*.

And, as I say, arrived here two or three weeks before Christmas in 1929, went home for Christmas (my mother and younger brother were still livin' in Tonopah), an' didn't know whether [I'd] be seem' the next Christmas in Hawthorne or not. Well, that was '29—this is '76! [Laughter] The shock of this: I could probably tell you more things of interest about that '19 to '29 in Tonopah and a few earlier years in Goldfield, than I'd be able to tell ya now from '29 to '76 in Hawthorne! Really not all that much happened. Oh, there's naturally bound to be something of interest, and I'll try to fish it out, and the little bit that

we can, have the personal touch in it, I'd like it; but nothing the way it was during that wild time of Tonopah. So, as I picture myself on tape now, we've just made the move from Tonopah to Hawthorne, in fact have made it, unless I have to backtrack to Tonopah—somethin' else comes up and I'll watch for that.

THE MINERAL COUNTY INDEPENDENT-NEWS

It was a rather hectic few years at the Hawthorne News. Actually, the *Hawthorne News* was started in Tonopah—1928, August I believe; I don't have any notes in front of me as to the exact date. And it was during that period of the late twenties when things were really getting tight in Tonopah, both papers (Bill Booth's *Bonanza*, Frank Garside's *Tonopah Times*).

Garside started his first, the *Gilbert Record* when Camp Gilbert was booming just northwest of Tonopah, and Garside got the jump on Booth by providing the new camp with a newspaper. The *Gilbert Record* was started in 1925 and that gave Garside two papers and Booth had only one, the *Bonanza*, so when Quartz Mountain boomed, he decided to have two newspapers; and he started a little weekly, the *Quartz Mountain Miner*, and it was printed in Tonopah, of course, as most of those satellite weekly publications were in those days.

With the end of the boom in Gilbert, Garside changed the name of his *Gilbert Record* to the *Tonopah Mining Record*. I

believe that was the full name, but some of the histories in Nevada newspapers list it as the *Nevada Mining Record*. But either way, that was the next step—the *Gilbert Record* into a mining paper. An' *Quartz Mountain Miner* was a very short-lived paper, so Booth then followed Garside's lead in whatever he had going with the *Quartz Mountain Miner*; he had merged it with the *Tonopah Mining Reporter*, as it was called. It was a little weekly paper devoted entirely to mining, published on Saturdays, all a remake of type that had been used in the *Bonanza*. Garside did likewise.

Each of them had to stay away from the word "Tonopah miner," because there had been a newspaper for years by the name of *Tonopah Miner*. Well, that piddled along, as I say, with no success to either paper. The two dailies were just struggling to get along, and now they had a step-child, or a poor relative, move in with them.

And Garside, along about '27 or so, had the chance of purchasing into the *Las Vegas Review*, so he branched out southerly into

the Las Vegas direction, and Booth not to be outdone, was lookin' around for another likely camp to establish a paper. The best, or only, choice at the time was Hawthorne in 1928, which had been without a paper for two years or more when the *Walker Lake Bulletin* (long-time paper) folded. Now that they were going to build the big ammunition depot in Hawthorne, Booth decided that was the place to strike. So, he started the *Hawthorne News* in 1928. It was printed in Tonopah from August of 1928 to December 1929. Of course, each week it was either mailed, or they saw someone goin' to Hawthorne and they'd say, "Say, will ya take these papers down to Hawthorne and give 'em to Jim Fenwick, so he can distribute 'em or deliver 'em?" And that was the absentee operation.

The only building the *Hawthorne News* had, and seldom used, just like the little store shed, was a twelve-by-fourteen frame building that had been used as the office of the *Quartz Mountain Miner*. That was hauled all the way from Quartz Mountain over the hills into Hawthorne. It was attached to some other lean-tos and shacks, quite a monstrosity. And of course with the sale of the *Bonanza* to the *Times* in 1929, in November as I recall, somewhere in there, the decision now was Booth's to find a new home base of operations cause he no longer was in business in Tonopah. And having retained some of the equipment out of the Bonanza office (that was part of his agreement with Garside), and having purchased some equipment from the then defunct *Tonopah Miner*, he decided to set up a plant in Hawthorne.

The first move was to get a building, he having purchased a lot on what was then considered way on the outskirts of Hawthorne, and it's about three blocks from where we sit now. He bought an old, unoccupied L-shaped residence in Tonopah,

had that hauled to Hawthorne. It had to be cut in two pieces, and upon arrival, instead of putting it back in the L-shaped style, why it was just elongated and made one long room and the little bedrooms torn out and the kitchen; and that became the first home of the *Hawthorne News* in Hawthorne.

We were squeezed in there, could barely turn around, one linotype, and an old press they had brought from the *Bonanza* office. And, I say *we*—Scoop Connors and myself—Booth's only two employees, handled all of the moving, getting established and printing the paper. Booth, the greater part of this time, had been at a home he owned just outside of La Jolla, California. He would come up once every two or three months to see how we were getting along, whether there was any money in the till which there seldom was, so he could take it back home. Well, this is our story from, as I say, the very end of '29 in December.

Now we were faced with no qualification to publish legal notices because the law then said that a newspaper must be printed in whole or in part within the county for a period of six months, and, of course, that from the time we put out the first issue in Hawthorne, the time when the *News* was printed in Tonopah could not be credited. And that was a reasonable cause to stop fly-by-night papers from rushing in before an election or a special bond issue or promotion and duck out again. It was a good law, and still is. So we had to sweat out the six months because the *Western Nevada Miner* was bein' printed and published in Mina as it had been for many years, most of those years under J. Holman Buck who gave up the ghost about 1926 or '27, and it was then bein' printed and published by Fred Eggleston.

So the first half year of 1930 there was no way they could give us any legal notices, and as time went on, we sensed that at least

two out of the three county commissioners and some of the other county officials didn't particularly want to give it to us. They were tied pretty close to the *Western Nevada Miner*. So we struggled through all of that year, oh, occasionally gettin' a few letterheads or legal forms to print from the county, but very few.

And Booth, I recall, came up at the end of the six months, appeared before the board and made an impassioned plea to give the *News* at least half of the legal publication, which in those days were very important because the rate for charging fifty years ago in ratio to the value of the dollar was far higher than it is today. For example, twenty cents a line back in 1930 or '31, and in 1975 we finally got it up to thirty-five cents a line. There are a few things you'll find in fifty years haven't doubled in base price: gasoline, butter, eggs, cigarettes, anything else. But frankly, it's a very restrictive price-fixing control; and, as I say, with good reason so they don't go hog wild.

But there were also many more legal notices required in 1930 than there are in 1976. Little by little they've chipped away; oh, the 1975 session whacked out a few more to where the public information (I'm gettin' off on a tangent here, but I don't care) today, each citizen is supposed to go to the courthouse where copies are available, as they say, put a little notice in the paper. And that's great if you live within a mile or two of the courthouse. If you live thirty-five miles from the county seat or clear across town and fightin' the traffic and then findin' which office to get into to seek the information that in older days, former days, you could find in the paper, but there has been quite a change. (I wanted to get that lick in as a little commercial.)

So that the little county business was quite important then, where today, while it's appreciated, it's only a minor part of our total operation.

Booth's impassioned plea won great sympathy from the commissioners, but they decided to continue the *Western Nevada Miner* as the official paper for another [chuckling] six months because "election was coming up" and "to see if there's any change," and the board gave him the usual reasons.

Well, in that November 1930 election things did turn around a little bit. There were some new county commissioners elected, two at least, and some other county officers; so that when they took office in '31, it was no strain for them because right after the election, the *Western Nevada Miner* could see the dead end of the tunnel (not the light in the tunnel, but the dead end), and that is when it folded at the end of 1930. So now the new board going on had no problem; the *Hawthorne News* became the official paper. It had put in its required six months, and had taken over in that capacity.

And an interesting sidelight (I'm trying to get this straight), after all that first six months of '30 that we had sweat out, not missing a publication, to qualify as a legal paper—that by '31 some of the old-timers were tryin' to get a little exemption to the requirement, of suspension I'm speaking of now. There was a period you couldn't suspend for more than four weeks because of great economic stress and other reasons but it had no effect on us then, so we sallied along and had a pretty fair year in '31 as Depression editions went; we were able to trade out our advertising for merchandise, which I might mention right there.

Considerable amount of our business was done that way by barter or trade-out. We would carry advertising for a garage; Burkham's garage had the Goodyear agency, T. O. McKinnon down in Mina had the Firestone. The tire companies in those days would reimburse the dealer up to fifty percent

of his advertising charges, not to exceed a certain amount in ratio to sales; it was a very complicated formula. So they were very good about advertising with us because we would give them a receipt even before we'd been paid, and a tear sheet of the paper. They would get their fifty percent reimbursement from the tire company, and then when we needed gasoline or a tire, that was charged off against their advertising bill. An' it was back and forth, a good amount of business.

But I say '31, a pretty fair year, and '32 the national depression and all dipping, we would have the ups and downs and no great upheaval on the political level at the county until that famous election in 1932 when Franklin D. Roosevelt started his long career; the tremendous swing away from the Republican label which the *Hawthorne News* basically was, a Republican paper, as Booth had always been a staunch Republican in Tonopah; oh, the closing of the Wingfield banks, all coming just before the election. It was pretty much of a general panic within Republican ranks all over the county. The *News*, however—and on this, Booth, Connors and myself were agreed, that Oddie was the man—we stuck with Oddie, and did carry Mineral County. I say *we* didn't carry it, but Oddie carried it.

But at the local level, as well as the national, there was a strong Democratic upsurge, and with this they were more or less threatening Booth: unless he changed his ways bein' a staunch Republican paper, that he could expect opposition. And these were some of the local Democratic leaders, and I'm not gonna mention the names—it's all water under the bridge. We lived through it; it was a small town. At that time you might say petty politics, but [they] said that they had nothing personally against Connors and myself, but they thought that they'd be better off finding

someone who would be more inclined to look at the Democratic view. And with the closing of the Wingfield banks that I mentioned and the political trauma, Booth did listen to them; and on December 31st of 1932, the end of the shift, that's when Connors and I got notice that our services were no longer required. He said that he could not afford two men, and therefore he'd let us both go; he didn't want to choose between us, and that his son Chauncey would come from Mill Valley, California to assist him, and that he would try to run the paper which—both by age and not being a printer, and very limited writer that he was—he was reducing it to a one-man operation.

Well, he and his son Chauncey had never gotten along well in the earlier days in Tonopah, as I had heard it. This was the first time I met Chauncey, seemed like a pleasant fellow, but apparently he gave the “old man,” as we called him, to understand that he, Chauncey, would be runnin' the paper, and not the old man. And they were at it in no time at all, and Chauncey picked up and returned to California.

Well then another son, Walter W. Booth, who had worked as a pressman and did a little linotype operating in Tonopah until he and the old man'd have a blow-up. Then he would take off and work as a hoist engineer—he was a licensed hoist engineer as well as a printer. Well, he came back to try it for awhile. Now bear in mind that this is the year 1933.

In the meantime, I was looking for a job; Connors wasn't certain what he was going to do, and I'd made one trip to Reno looking around, tryin' to find work; and on the return trip, I stopped in Yerington where I visited my aunt; in fact stayed over night. I could always get a good meal there, and believe me, we were flat at the time. And she, having picked up a little information (and she was one of these

closed-mouth, never-get-in-trouble type), but just out of loyalty I guess, she suggested that I go have a talk with the young lady in Yerington that had told her something about what was going on in Hawthorne, and I did. And from this I gleaned that the group that had put the pressure on Booth to shape up or ship out, pretty much intended that he would be shipping out anyhow because they gave him that little rope, first the one son, then with the other. And they were offering some financial assistance with stock involvement and all because there was a mortgage with one of the closed Wingfield banks, and they had offered to try to assist him bail out of that. In fact, we forced their hand on it later by threatening to buy the paper on it, and then they had to come with the money.

But through all this, Connors and myself talked it over, and a number of people urged us to “stay and fight,” as they called it. We said, “Oh, that’s great,” you know. Sometimes you have to have something. to fight with, sometimes you have to have something to live on, and we had no financial backing whatsoever. But we made the determination to give it a fling. In modern parlance you probably say “what d’ya got to lose, outside of a couple hundred bucks?”

We drove to Mina and talked with Mrs. Lorena Buck Cornelius, the daughter of J. Holman Buck who then had the idle plant of the now defunct *Western Nevada Miner*. She offered us a very reasonable rate on the press and some hand type and a job press. The linotype had gone under repossession. Then we were able to locate a linotype in Reno, stored, that had been repossessed from another paper, and they’d virtually given it to us for one hundred dollars down and payments, the interest attached to that one. We talked it over—and this is all happening now, bear in mind, late in January of ’33.

Then we had the damndest time tryin’ to raise four hundred dollars: Connors goin’ to his friends and some relatives, and he finally got it. I raised my two hundred dollars this way; my dear old aunt, Elizabeth Monahan in Yerington, she took one hundred dollars out of postal savings. And she was a widow supportin’ a son still in high school, or just out of high school, and she’d been the sole support; and her daughter, although she had a job, first with the Lyon County Bank that went broke and after that she worked in the Tonopah Banking Corporation and *that* went broke, so she had nothing. But she spared that one hundred dollars out of her savings account. My dad didn’t have a dime, but he got a friend from Reno to lend him the fifty, and he gave it to me, not as a loan, but as a outright gift. And the fourth fifty I needed. Here a schoolteacher in Hawthorne with whom I’d gone all through grade school and high school in Tonopah, Mae Vuich, now Mrs. Walter Johnson in Las Vegas (her husband was later a county superintendent of schools and taught through Nevada and had been a deputy superintendent of public instruction), she gambled fifty dollars, took that out of her postal savings, which incidentally, it was more than a year before I got them paid. My aunt, well over a year. Neither one of them would accept a cent of interest. And that was the financing end of it. Connors did likewise.

So out of the four hundred dollars, we gave Mrs. Cornelius two hundred dollars down for the *Western Nevada Miner* plant, and George Garcia, representin’ the Mergenthaler Linotype Company handling the possession on the paper for the linotype, we gave him two hundred. We had no operating capital from there on, and that’s the way we started.

We printed two or three jobs before we got out the first edition of the *Mineral County Independent*; and it was I believe on March

first—one of the flukes of a Wednesday 'cause for several years there after it was always February 28th, it seemed. We were havin' a hard time straightenin' it out in our files for two or three years. But there we started and we thought we were in business, and about three days later a fella named Franklin Roosevelt closed every bank in the country, the bank holiday.

Well, we knew it would be a long struggle because now, in '33, we were faced with this deal on becoming qualified to handle legal notice. After we had stuck it out for six months with the old *Hawthorne News*, some of the other publishers around the state thought, "Well, this six months might not be long enough; let's get the legislature to change that to one year," and they did. They got right under the wire before we got the *News* started; it was the early part of the session, and now we had to sweat it out for one full year with no legal publications of any kind. Well, that would naturally put everything in favor of the *Hawthorne News*, except that Booth, as I'd said, was getting old. He really couldn't back it himself insofar as pulling a shift. One son came and left; another son came and left. By now the banks were trying to pick up these overdue mortgages unpaid, which included one on the *Hawthorne News*.

And I'm tryin' to remember exactly on the paper purchase, the purchase of the mortgage; I think it was with the old Reno National and Judge J. Emmet Walsh, as I recall it. And Booth had always been antagonistic to Walsh, and I think Walsh decided to buy up the paper.

Somehow or other he'd asked me to go into Reno, so I did. I'd wind up in George Springmeyer's office; it seems that Springmeyer and Walsh were very close friends, as attorneys. So they went through their legal procedures, and they put me in as some kind of receiver. I was supposed to go

down and tell them they either settle up or buy back this paper. When I went down and tried to talk to Booth and he said, "I'm goin' for a gun and you better get the hell out of here and stay out of here." Booth wouldn't let me near the place.

I went back and I told Walsh, "I'm not going to get in the middle of that; we're havin' a hard enough time competin' with him." I said, "I'll be the receiver for the *Mineral County Independent* if I'm not careful, instead of the *Hawthorne News*."

Well, as this reached that stage of threat and foreclosure and the like, this is where the politicians came out of the woodwork. I say "the politicians," they were two or three leaders of the Democratic party, two of them members of the three-man board of commissioners, and—no, I'll take it back, one at that time, but two other office holders in the courthouse and the general activists in the party—they decided that here was a wonderful opportunity to clean it up once and for all, to take over the *Hawthorne News*, send us down the tube, and they would have their paper. They wound up holding a couple of secret meetings (and they thought they were secret; I got a pretty good report out of them), in which they agreed they'd have ten members of committee that would own the *Hawthorne News* and put up the money to take over this mortgage. They would bring in an outside editor, which they did, and that they would give Booth an opportunity to either sell, or if he could, pay them back for all their advancements. So they gave him a couple of options, I don't know the details on it, and this is growing, as I say, well into 1933 now; the months seemed to drag, but they moved rather rapidly anyhow. I 'm tryin' to think and talk here at the same time 'cause this is a very crucial point in the whole thing.

When the so-called businessmen's committee took over this thing—and they were not all businessmen, there were only three bonafide businessmen out of the ten, two or three politicians—but they represented themselves as bein' a business group "interested in the welfare of Hawthorne"—that's one statement they made to us at one time. And just to keep the competition going, why, they thought they would assist the *Hawthorne News*. They dragged along and they brought in a man named Joe Keno, a printer from Reno, and he was more or less their representative. And it was just back and forth, neither paper making a dime, squabbling and fighting some; and before we realized it, the *Independent* had completed its full year required publication at the end of February '34, and now we could receive legal notices.

Well, the battle was on once more. We had a friend on the board of commissioners, one not a friend, and the other one neutral; and they jockeyed back and forth and pretty much seemed to divide the work up. And it was only a few months now, we have an election in 1934, and the lines were really chosen again. We lost the friend we had on the board of commissioners. Two of the new board members elected in '34 were so-called stockholders in this *Hawthorne News* situation. However, the sheriff who was also a stockholder, as was his undersheriff, was surprisingly upset and defeated in the election of '34, and everything began to get turned around little bit cross-eyed and cock-eyed you might call it.

Well with this new board taking over in 1935, they were determined that they were gonna bury the *Independent* for once and for all. They just put out orders to the county officers up in both floors of the courthouse that not one item of printing was to be given to the *Mineral County Independent*; it would all go to the *Hawthorne News*. And so we

cautioned them that there're certain laws about anyone havin' a pecuniary interest in any business bein' a county commissioner and sellin' to the county, and that didn't seem to bother them at all. They went right on their merry way, and we decided it had to be the showdown that first six months of '35.

We were takin' printing from the county—officers who wanted to give it to us. And we wouldn't turn in a bill because when rejected it would force us into sum' the county for it, and we had no money to sue the county with. But by doing this work and hopin' some day in the future we could get paid by puttin' it on the come or even donating it to the county, whatever was bein' done in our shop was not bein' done in the *Hawthorne News* shop, and so those fellas couldn't be collectin' for that work either! And this rankled them, and the battle, as I say, really started in then.

Now bear in mind that you and I were talkin' and mentioning about an article about a Neil J. McGee. Well, he also had pulled an upset in the election of '34, and we had a new recorder and auditor now who was more friendly to us than his predecessor. And it was just this way, that neither paper was gettin' paid for anything. We started filing taxpayer's protests against any payment being made to the *Hawthorne News* on the grounds of violation of law, because two county commissioners serving on the board and approvin' those claims held ownership in the *Hawthorne News*.

Well, now they were consulting attorneys or anyone they could ask who didn't want to charge them a fee. We were getting a little legal advice, and this thing just wrangled on those first two or three months, and a real struggle, to where it was along about March, I think, that we were first approached by the surviving remnants of the ten-member business committee.

And I should mention at this point, now after the sheriff lost out and his undersheriff went with him, they wanted to bail out; they didn't want any more part of tryin' to run this newspaper from a distance and could find no one to buy their so-called stock. Two or three who had invested in it and thought they were gonna make some money didn't, so the ten reduced to—it was either three or four on the final go-around. But the one who was gathering up their interest, buying them off for the small amount they had in it, was a local drugstore owner, Owen H. Bott. His son Jack Bott, still is in the business in the same location, the Golden Key drugstore. Jack and I often laugh and muse about when his dad was gonna put me out of business, and he wondered what his dad was doin' in politics and in drugstore, but back and forth. But nevertheless, it was down to the wire where Bott told the others to either put up or shut up. He was gonna negotiate with us, and some of those who were the most furious in that ten-man group, violently objected to the idea that the *Independent* would continue to survive. He said that they must come with their assessments, they must put up money, or let him handle it.

Well, we started jockeying along about March or April when no bills were being paid at the courthouse. Booth had been down to his home in—I want to say Bird Rock or Eagle Rock; it was right outside of La Jolla—and they brought him back up. And Booth hadn't been receiving anything from the business himself. He hadn't come up with enough money to pay them off when they had purchased the paper on the mortgage, and it was kind of at a standstill. He didn't want us (Connors and myself) to get it, but everybody was at a standstill. So about another month went by and we still held up the claims, and we weren't collecting anything.

I think it was after possibly about the May meeting when no bills were paid—we'd stop in the auditor's office—that Booth wrote one of his parting shots there at the county auditor, said he was “a tool” of ours, as you have it in your record* and the like. And that was what might be termed the wind-down of the *Hawthorne News*.

Old man Bott, a stubborn little Englishman born in London, quick of speech, snappiest temper and all, finally made a tentative deal. Well, we agreed—I don't even remember what we paid for the damn thing; I'd have to go look up the records—to bail them out. I think Booth got \$1500 or something out of it was all they gave him. We made this deal that we would pay time, but we couldn't pay him cash. We had to pay him over a period of time, eighteen months or so; didn't want to borrow any money from the bank or something.

And so old Ed Lunsford, the attorney side, who had once been a fine printer himself (an uncle of Mrs. Harry Frost, Ethel's uncle), he put together some brief legal papers for our side because Harry volunteered to be the guarantor. Ed Lunsford went rummaging through the law books, and we didn't want anybody stuck, but by this guarantor that Harry would guarantee if we defaulted or failed to pay off the *Hawthorne News*, that he had first refusal so to speak, that he could come in and pay off the difference, and that he would own the Hawthorne News, and nobody else. I still have the old documents; it was the damndest arrangement you ever saw. And Harry was doin' it for friendship's sake because he said to us, “By God,” he said, “if you guys don't pay that thing off,” he says, “I don't know where the hell *I'm* gonna get the money to pay it off!” [Chuckle] Then

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Lunsford, he might have to buy it himself. But nevertheless, we did meet our payments; Harry was our guarantor, and we had that all worked out in one trip to Reno. And then we come back and a few minor changes, why, through Old Man Bott (as we called him) as a spokesman, the big, massive merger was made. I can't remember, I think it was \$3500, the total deal or something—\$1500 down. However, we worked it out, but it wasn't a great deal of money by modern standards.

And back we had to go to Reno again, and this time Captain Walter Rowson was drawing all the papers for his fellow Londoner Mr. Bott, and of course Rowson and I were on very good terms, too, although Rowson and Booth weren't. And we prepared all these papers and signed them there in Reno, and good heavens, you'd think you were mergin' the First National Bank with Security or something at the time! Then we had to place all the papers in escrow. We went down to the First National Bank, and they wanted a dollar and twenty cents a month to handle the escrow business, and little old man Bott, tighter than hell, he says, "Well I think we can do better than that." We walked out the bank; I'm a little bit embarrassed after takin' up this man's time. At \$1.20 a month—sixty cents each we were to pay. Each side was to pay sixty cents.

And so out the bank we went, came down the side street, Second there across the alley, and went into Washoe County Title and Guaranty Company, C. H. Knox; and Bott had known him. So he went up and he really made a much better deal than we would've gotten at the bank. Washoe Title charged us sixty cents a month, instead of \$1.20 for the escrow papers, that meant we each paid only thirty cents [chuckle]. And the last thing, Old Man Bott he says, "Well now, that's our business; we shake hands. No hard feelings?"

And I said, "No, no hard feelings."

"Well," he says, "just to seal it," he says, I'm not a drinkin' man, but I do once in a while," he says, "enjoy a bottle of good ale. Would you care for one?"

And I said, "Well, okay."

So he insisted we walk down to the Riverside Ear 'cause he knew that they had Guinness's ale, and I'm used to ten-cent beer. I think in '35 you could buy a bottle of beer for fifteen or maybe twenty at the most. This ale, I don't know whether it was thirty cents a bottle, sixty cents for the two, or sixty cents for each one; because he didn't get much change out of a couple of silver dollars, but he had two on there—but I don't know because after I got half way through the one bottle of ale, I couldn't count to \$1.20 anyhow. That was the damndest dynamite I ever had, and he asked me if I cared for *another one*. And I said no, so he said, "Well, I believe I'll have one."

Here was the man just a few minutes before that walked from the First National Bank to the Cy Knox's Washoe Title [chuckling] to save sixty cents a month (thirty cents for himself), but then walk clear to the Riverside to buy the highest priced ale in Reno, and wanted to go for a second. [Laughter] And that was one of the many amusing highlights (or lowlights, whatever you care to call them) in the whole transaction. But that's the way we topped it off; he with two bottles of ale and me with one, and I swear I thought I could handle my beer pretty well, but that potent ale, why, it just felt like the chair was following me out the back door [laughing]

And of course, we returned to Hawthorne, and then they settled with Booth. He went back then to California, wouldn't speak to Connors or myself. And then now we have both papers. I wondered if we're gonna be able to keep one alive, or if we'd just inherited two problems.

And it was quite a little while from '35 say till, oh, just about 1940 that things began to pick up after they started the construction work at the depot and all. There was just no money to be made in a paper, and contrary to all that wrangling and arguing and fussing over the county business (they used to call it the "county business") that really didn't mean much, but every little bit counted.

The main reason in those days that people wanted the county business (in the printing of the legal notices) was cash. We had bigger customers than the county, but as I said before, they were all in trade-out, and that was about the only place you could do business where you could collect anything in cash. Why, good heavens, I can recall buyin' a complete set of four tires (course they were \$4.75 x 19) and go down to the Mina garage in Mina and T. O. McKinnon would fit them out. Walk out—you never left a dime; you had a transaction of signed slips. You could get a full set of tires, but you wouldn't be able to take a dollar out of the place. And one touch and another.

We used to buy milk here from old man Barlow, A. H. Barlow, one of the colorful characters, you know, from Wabuska, Candelaria, Tonopah, the brother-in-law of Ben Edwards that's been mentioned in any book; he had little Dutch Creek Ranch out here and a few milk cows. And I recall one time our milk bill was up around thirty-six dollars and he was runnin' on just the threads of a tire on that old Dodge truck (open truck he ran in) and so I had T. O. McKinnon order two truck tires, and they came high. Now, we're not talkin' about the little \$4.75 x 19 for a Chevy. The tires cost thirty-six dollars and I owed him thirty-two; they were eighteen each. Now I delivered to old man Barlow the first two new tires he'd had in years; he was thrilled to death, and he gives me credit for thirty-six

dollars, wipes out the thirty-two dollars; I got four dollars credit comin' for milk! [Laughing]

We did business all over town, all over the county that way, and that was really, as I say back in those days, when people said, "Oh, the county subsidizes a paper; the county is their sole source of support." That was a lot of bunk. The county or the school had very little done in those days. They didn't have all the forms you need now. They didn't have computers and counting machines and all that stuff. They'd have simple warrants, and if they had any money in the bank, they issued a warrant; if they didn't, they'd tell the teacher to come back next Tuesday and see it they had it. But that was the real secret of why they wanted business in those days—was the cash factor.

We hadn't changed any in the basic printing operating from what we had done in Tonopah or doin' all over the United States. We must remember that all newspapers then were printed by hot metal, as we continue to do this day, not the new cold type or offset system. But our greatest limitation was money, finance during those Depression years. Piece of equipment break, we'd have to weld or braze; you couldn't afford to send away and buy the part. We did the best we could in those days to keep it running by the Rube Goldberg operation or anything else—we had to. Even down to the amount of metal that we had on hand.

And I recall vividly of the 1934 election when we broke a rule even to place an ad on the front page. I can't recall at the moment whether that was for H. R. Cooke or Clyde D. Souter; I could look it up. One of them had come in town late and thought that they were not receiving equal time, as it were; it was the last issue before election. And, as I recall (well, I'll have to look that one up for you—I believe it was Souter) from someone anyhow, that we were not supporting, put it that way.

But so they could not accuse us of bias and prejudice and all, why, we finally agreed to break the rule and allow 'em to put an ad on the front page.

Strange part was, we had several extra pages to print in that final issue before election. So we would make up two pages at a time (we could only print two pages at a time in those days and usually printed a total of four pages); we had a six- or eight-page paper, but we were running out of metal. To set type for the front page or the final columns that had to be filled, why, we would stop (I say we, my partner Scoop Connors and I—he continued to operate) and as fast as the two pages were made up, he would make the press run while I continued to get out a little copy or make up two more pages. Then when he finished the two, he'd put 'em on the stone, and I would break up those two pages right away, so we could melt the metal, get that back in use in the linotype so we would have enough to go around, so to speak. But it was a struggle that all weeklies went through in those days.

Walter Cox and I often talk about the few times (two or three times a year, as he always called it) you could get to Reno. Well, we would visit Harry Frost at the Reno Printing Company and go over to Carlisle's, see old man [Arthur J.] Buell, cranky old devil but not too bad a guy, and then Ray Jefferson later; and go through their plants, particularly their stock room where they have shelves with end cuts, as you might call it, and odds and ends sorts of paper, that whatever they would give us, we'd put it in the trunk of the car and bring it home. As long as we could fit it into any kind of a job we were printing, why it was good stock, as long as it was the right size for statements and noteheads and the kind. And that was a regular practice, keeping down expenses.

And I believe that I told you that when we started the *Independent* and had done that with the *Hawthorne News* before, that we bought our newsprint from Flanigan Warehouse in Reno. We'd buy it one bundle at a time, which was 2500 sheets, and put it in the trunk of a car or back seat of a car to beat the freight bill. And we were printing six or seven hundred papers; that was good for three weeks' supply. We had friends who would tell us they were coming to Hawthorne, particularly salesmen, anyone that would do it for us. "Please stop by Flanigan's and pick us up a bundle of newsprint." And it was a real down-to-the-nubbin operating in those days.

As a matter of fact, our equipment was upgraded a little, but not much, right up to World War II, then you couldn't get equipment; prices skyrocketed. As I say, I went into the service for two years, and that's when I, in '46 (the year after I was out of the service) we made arrangements to buy the entire plant over in Bridgeport, California, to pick up some new and more modern equipment. And, of course, since then we've gone ahead with additional linotypes, so much so that it became quite a joke in Nevada, since there were only two hot metal plants left in the state—Tonopah and ourselves.* And when they walked in this office and saw five linotypes sittin' out there—I can recall when the *Nevada State Journal* had four—the *Gazette* had seven or so—they were much better equipped when they were separate papers. But we actually had five out there. One we used for parts, cannibalizing it, and kept the other four runnin' in good shape.

*While we continue to use some hot metal, the newspaper is now printed entirely by offset.

And I tell people, I said, “Well, Bill Harrah’s not the only one who can look ahead. He bought all the old automobiles in the country; I’m buyin’ all the old linotypes. And some day when some wealthy galoot comes along and says he was a printer or always wanted to be one and has money to burn, he will want to set up his own little backyard print shop, old style, as it was then, and then that’s when the price of those machines have a real value to them. In the meantime, we’re using ’em, gettin’ good production from them.”

Oh, we folded papers by hand; we did practically all of it in those early days, that we’ve gotten away from. But, I repeat, the main reason for the slow progress or whatever you call it, was that one word—money. We were very limited in what we could finance. Our credit was not always the best, not that we’d beaten any bills, but we hadn’t established any credit anywhere and had to rely upon friends to okay or go good for us, so to speak, when we were buyin’ stock or buyin’ a piece of equipment. That was our own experience.

NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING

That legal advertising, incidentally, that the Reno Newspapers keep stressing, you know, that’s a very minute part of the business, and as several of the weeklies often say, well if it’s so insignificant, we wish to hell they’d stop givin’ us that rough competition they do to get that which can be placed, you know in any one paper. They’re never bashful about that in hustling for it.

Well there really isn’t too much to say because in a small town like this there’s a limited amount that the stores can advertise—grocery, yes, ’cause people—uh—women, not only the women, but the men; many men shoppers you’ll see in these stores—they—

they watch the ads just as closely as the women do, so pricing of that. And some special, whether—it might be on tires, it might be on a closeout on TVs or radio, we get a percentage of advertising on that, and the spring and fall sales and the like.

There’s really a limit, first in their own volume of business because advertising—good advertising—we always say is never an expense; it’s an investment, just the same as payin’ a window washer to keep your window in your store clean, so people can see in, what you have. Poor advertising is a waste of money; then it’s not advertising at all. And we try with the few stores we have, and never crowd them, but go seasonally with them, watching the holidays, the Mother’s Day, graduation time, of course Christmas, and there’s possibly something around Valentine’s Day; but when we think that the time is ripe that they buy advertising space, they’re not donating a dollar to us, but they’re making an investment on moving their merchandise.

It’s hard to describe, but ’cause you can walk around the so-called shopping district in an hour. I won’t say you spend too much time in it even if you could, and then you can pick and choose right there. So when you try to keep them bringing in as much advertising as they possibly can afford, they’re somewhat like a gambling joint. Pappy [Raymond I.] Smith used to say, you know, don’t spend any more than you can afford to lose, and we tell our advertisers that, “Don’t blow it all in one campaign, it might turn sour on you; and then your budget is shot to hell.” Other times when you come in with a little or medium size ad or increase your business, but to solicit them every week—. We do some by phone, those who want us to, and we give ’em the reminders. If they want it, okay, if they don’t, okay. That’s about all you can say—tell ’em.

We don't personally go out and work the town the way a big city would employ a salesman to do this. We don't because then we'd be just as guilty as the merchant—be spending money, as I say, on misdirected or poor advertising. We'd be throwing our money away after paying a young lady or young man to get out and solicit all that, and then you find that in each week's paper the number of hours he spent out soliciting it and he didn't bring in enough advertising to pay his wages, see, and there's not that chance to recoup because you've called on the same ones all the time. It became a merry-go-round. And we do not solicit classified advertising. We carry a fair amount for a small paper, and we're rather proud of it because we have competition in that area in—you'll find in most bars there'll be a bulletin board or someone thumbtacks up his own classified.

The Navy paper carries free classified advertising for employees of the Depot which is a little discriminatory; I don't know if they extend that to the retired employees or not. If they don't they might have an issue of discrimination on their hands. And we have a little bulletin board out in front of our office and see someone has tacked up, you know, a trailer for sale or a camper or a boat and list the name; and we'll furnish the space. But one time someone came in and wanted to know if we had a thumbtack, and we gave 'em a thumbtack, but we finally decided to cut that off. [Chuckling] If they wanted to advertise on our property at no charge [laughing] they'd have to furnish their own thumbtack.

Incidentally on the legals, I believe I told you that we took quite a cut in volume of legal in the 1975 session when they raised the summary of administration from eight thousand to sixty thousand dollars—the estate to be administered [N.R.S. 145.040]. And, I really have no objection. Why hell,

there's times when I felt guilty about what we had to charge for a legal notice. The attorney takes his bite out of it, and the administrator, unless it's one in the family, and so little left in the estate. I often wonder what would be better. And the only reservation I have is that—well *two* reservations—one, that creditors are given due notice (it's supposed to be by mail now), you know personally, information, that they don't just gloss over a lot of creditors till the time has elapsed when they could file a claim. That was the one good reason for requiring, particularly on those large estates. I think sixty thousand was raisin' it too high. If they'd raised it say from eight to twenty on the estate because many times there are creditors out of town or some distance away or gone at the time and don't realize that they have only limited time to file a claim.

The other is, since they are eliminating all these expenses of publishing, and I have ribbed the attorneys about this, they should also cut down a little on their fee for legal services against the state. They don't have to prepare as many notices as they used to. They don't have to process it and they keep their chronological score card on each estate, you know; have we published this, did we get the affidavit? A lot of work they used to have to do has been eliminated, so I think they should take a little cutback on the total amount they nick the estate.

We reject an average of I'd say seven (seven to nine) classified ads every week. They come to us by mail; some have checks enclosed. I have one buried here with a one dollar bill in it, I think, which wouldn't pay the cost, and I never returned it because unless they didn't publish the ad, I've never spent the dollar. And unless they enclose a self-addressed envelope with stamp, at thirteen cents a throw, we just sit tight.

“Here is a check for two dollars. Please place following ad in your classified section; send us a copy of this ad: Representatives selling our line of high fashion, low price costume jewelry exclusive in your area, no money required.” Otherwise they’d be writing and asking us to return this check unless they went ahead and stopped payment, but they don’t bother to write us or spend a second thirteen cent stamp on us. And this one is: “Like to own a dress shop? Complete inventory, name brands, beautiful redwood fixtures, complete training program, \$12,500 investment.” So—and that’s Florida! All they’re askin’ you to do is to send in your money; they’ll keep it, which incidentally [is] one we used to have. I’m glad I read some years ago about that one; be careful on these gyppo ads, and here’s how they skin off your local people, your neighbors. Some kind of a gimmick, “Try this—that—your money gladly refunded if not satisfactory.”

And there’s one outfit, and this was an actual case where someone wrote in and demanded a refund ‘cause they figured they’d bought a bunch of junk, and the gyppo outfit responded by saying if they’d read carefully it says that we did say your money gladly refunded if not satisfactory, but we find your money very satisfactory, therefore there’ll be no refund.

And the other big racket, and they come from six or seven sources. And I get so disgusted with my neighboring weekly papers, for the sake of a couple of bucks they’ll print them: “Make extra money Addressing mail at home.” And then you send in four dollars and ninety-eight cents, and they send you a one-page mimeographed sheet that shows how to put the return address in the upper left-hand corner, the name and address in the center, and be sure to include zip code or something. If it’s a postcard they want, you

put the message on the reverse side. They give you all these instructions; they say there must be many businesses and organizations in your area that are seeking this type of work done for them; go out and find yourself some customers. And the poor devils that take the bait, they do it.

Now let’s see this one is out of St. Louis, Missouri: “Distributorship now available, man or woman, brand new concept in infants wear.” They didn’t even send a check, “If payment is required in advance, please call this office collect and we’ll mail a check immediately.” Probably wouldn’t even honor the collect call. These are just a few that I’ve saved, mainly because they had the check.

Here’s one that says—got a check here for five dollars—this is 1974. “Ground floor opportunity now available, brand new concept??—everything became a new concept in the last two, three years—”in vending products to hotel-motel industry, etc. Seeking responsible person to own and operate nationally advertised cocktail-mix vending routes. This is tremendous opportunity for the right person, can start part-time, no selling, company secures accounts, your success is our success—” and so on. “Please insert; we supply products.” Like a mini-franchise deal, you put up your money and they’ll tell you where to go and sell it, and you buy your merchandise from them, and then the hotel-motel has a lot of complaints, they’ll throw you out, and you got a lot of merchandise and everything. “Part-time weekdays, inventorying and shopping for major national corporations, permanent local work, no investment.” This is out of Atlanta, Georgia; this is actually a lot of fancy words for *repossession*—that’s a check for three dollars. That was ’77. See, I have ’em for years. Now, for some reason I started saving some of these in ’74. And I thought eventually they’d put me on that one famous

list and stop sending 'em to me because they interchange a lot of ideas.

And here's one—Indiana. It's a check for four dollars and eighty cents. That's in '74. "Save gas. Get as much as thirty-seven percent more miles per gallon. Money-back guarantee. Agents also wanted to sell auto owners—."Bla, bla. That's one there. And we have, let's see, this is a two-dollar and fifty check.

This is out of Hawaii (Hilo, Hawaii): "Help wanted, one hundred weekly possible" (get that word possible) "addressing mail for firms. Full and part-time at home. Send stamped, self-addressed envelope, one dollar handling" to this outfit in Hilo, Hawaii. Well, they get the dollar out of them, and then they put a thirteen tent stamp on it and send 'em one of those mimeographed sheets I was tellin' you about. Well, if they get a million dollars and spend a hundred and fifty thousand of it on postage and mailing out of the mimeographed forms, they made a pretty good profit for the year.

These come in all the time, all the time; I can't get off the list, and—"Yucca Supplement, free report of yucca's victories over arthritis, no obligation." Write to this outfit in Arizona; this is a '77, imagine—check for four dollars. And, most of 'em have a rubber stamp or a letterhead, and so-called insertion orders all just run off on a typewriter, and they're so phony though on the surface that I just don't believe in 'em. I think that if I'm down to that level—if I were to hurt just one local friend, neighbor, reader.

This is five dollars and six cents. This is out of Richmond, Virginia: "Two hundred dollars weekly, stuffing envelopes already stamped and addressed, free supplies, send self-addressed stamped envelope to—" Then they got you on—how in the hell can they pay someone two hundred dollars weekly

to stuff envelopes if they've already stamped and addressed them? "Cause if they're in that quantity, they'd better buy a stuffing machine.

I used to have two phones here in the office before Bell quit advertising and before prices went up; the bill for this one and the bill for the one out in front came in separate envelopes because it was cheaper for them with their stuffing machines and all land the billing machines to pick up each number and automate it right on through. So this outfit here, with that kind of money (two hundred a week), they can go buy a stuffing machine. Here's a six dollar one in May of '77. Well, this is "a hundred and fifty weekly, stuffing envelopes possible." Well, they put "possible" on theirs.

Now, I can't say I have the only one—the only paper that does not charge for a card of thanks to an individual or a group particularly pertaining to death or illness. Death and illness, we allow 'em to thank the doctors by name and the nurses by the name or the name of the hospital or anyone who assisted, and there's no charge. We charged the Senior Parents one the other day because they had fourteen or fifteen stores that they were directly crediting, and that is our rule. If they're advertising other businesses, then we believe that in their going around soliciting donations, they should get enough in the kitty to buy one less case of coke or beer and save five dollars to pay for a card of thanks, since those merchants are gonna get a return now on it if these people list them by name. And that's the only rule we have on it.

I know it was seven years ago and Chris Sheerin came down and covered for me one year; he was startled when he found out he wasn't supposed to charge for a card of thanks. He said that before he left the paper in Elko, they were chargin' a dollar flat, you know. You try to get one in the Reno papers

for free. Even a death notice up there and that little box they have, I don't know what they charge now; but when my mother died they wanted ten dollars just to put that little note up in the corner because—the same when Joe Viani died, I asked 'em that, you know, at the request of the family please donate to the Cancer Society, and Ty Cobb said, "Say Jack, we can't do it."

I said, "You what?"

"No," he said, "we got some house rules here." I said, "What in the hell is it comin' to," I said, "does Speidel own a floral shop, too, or what is it?"

"Oh, it's just one of those rules."

And I said, "They can buy that little box up in the corner?"

And he said, "Yeah."

And I said, "Well, just skip it." I said, "We'll put it in our paper at no charge."

And most the people around here, they did, they donated very generously, to the cancer fund.

But where does this community service come in, these Pulitzer Prizes, these Press Association awards, when a newspaper will decline to add a couple of lines to a story that it is the family's wish or the family requests that memorial contributions be made to the Heart Fund or the Cancer Fund or the Shriner's Hospital for Crippled Children. We've had them all. To me that's a little act of community service, but these boys at the cash register don't look at it that way.

Well, you know I've been wantin' to use that word since it's getting almost as good as aware and address now, but we have a very good "rapport" with KVLV—I got it! I knew I'd get it in there somehow—with the station there—a manager—I'm tryin' to think of his name. Oh, he's a little retired fellow, Lester Pearce, and kind of active in Kiwanis and all. I have sent business to them, particularly

when our paper comes out on Thursday, and there's a very important announcement that someone has to make.

I said, "Well, if you can crack it on the Fallon radio, you can beam it back in 'cause we don't come out until next Wednesday." And some of our merchants, as I say, that advertise it—oh, one or two that figure the newspaper doesn't do 'em a damn bit of good. They told me so, and they advertise on the radio. Well, that's that merchant's money; he has a right to spend it where and how he wishes. And we don't get mad at him. If we're going to get mad at anybody, it'd be the merchant, not the radio station. And they've rendered some good service in here with those spot announcements, so, I think it's good that we have it.

And I don't think it's ever taken a dollar away from us. There have been dollars spent with them *out* of Hawthorne, but I'm sure they're either dollars I would not have received, whether they were or weren't advertisers because they spend as much as they think they' should spend with the paper. They want to spend a little more with that radio station, if they didn't spend that, there's no guarantee that I would be getting it. They'd probably have some direct mail junk or something like that go around. So, well we have a very good—to repeat—rapport, and I like the little station. We listen to it all day long here in our shop. I think it's good service.

As I say, candidates coming out of particularly Reno-Las Vegas area where they're accustomed to it, and their TV renders them a good service, I believe, in those areas if they can afford to get on all three channels because that's the one danger of TV, you have more than one station. There's no guarantee you're watchin'. And if it's a special, and you miss it, you never get a chance to see it again unless you put it on all three. Little spot

announcements, they should divide them up and have one or several on each of the three [channels], because you look any—like Hawthorne, I've heard people say that they wouldn't think of watching channel four, we'll say national broadcast. They didn't like Chancellor. We're talkin' about the news period now and other programs, but the news period, especially, each one has a preference; and sometimes it's a like or dislike for the announcer.

And here again as a little aside, I don't know why the TV stations haven't wised up to the fact that (most people I talk to, and I know it's been in the TV Guide) this clowning around and tryin' to give you the weather is one of the greatest wastes of what's purported to be valuable time, and they're sellin' it on the advertising rate, giggling and kidding around. And where one man used to be able to tell you what the weather temperature was for today, the predictions for tomorrow and get it over with, now they go into all these funnels and tunnels and a map of the United States, and you feel like a little kid, you know, gettin' a poor grade in geography, history or something, trying to remember which is this belt or that belt. But that is just an aside on there, and I think that *TV Guide* had a wonderful argument; and some stations back East have dropped that, tryin' to make the weather report into a talk show, and reducing it in time and gettin' the message across. It was in just the last month or so, and the letters to the editor were very responsive in favor of just having some one person to give the weather. I'm not tellin' 'em how to run their station.

But back to this political advertising, I tell the candidates whether I'm for them or not. But they ask me. I said, "Well, before you blow too much on TV out of Reno, there's no guarantee that anybody out here is gonna see it." The reception's not all that good. We

have translators on the mountain; we get it second hand. In fact, last night I don't know whether it was a prelude to this rainstorm we had, but one period there in prime time, we couldn't get anyone of the three Reno stations. And finally one of the three came back on, and I don't even remember which one it was 'cause I turned it off again; it was an old rerun program. You get into anything past March and into April, why you're seem' the same show over again. And they're not always that good the first time.

But I point out that the fellows on the job, even out at the Depot, can have a little transistor radio; and Fallon seems to be the more popular. We have that strong one out of Reno now. That's KCRL. They have picked up a pretty fair following, but people will be talking, lunch hour, listening. They can't have TV around where they are, and they get in the habit of listening to the radio. So those little thirty second punch lines and maybe even a full minute of key time beamed out of Fallon on the radio all day long will do them far more good day after day, than one costly program in color, paid for by professional outfit to put together on TV.

And, in fact, I've helped some, even our locals, type up their spot announcements, and before they leave (because when they go they're under those strict federal communication rules), they have to have 'em sign in person, you know. There's certain disclaimers they have to sign, and they have to authorize it, and they're under much stricter regulations than we are. So before they go over there blind, I said, "Well, get your stuff together in case there's something in there that the station says, 'Well, we don't know. We've been called on allowin' 'em to say this, you know; we used to let it get by, that my opponent is a bastard and now the common connotation is that you're tryin' to say bastard [chuckling] ,

instead of bastard’,”—something like that—little things.

I always remember one time that Pearce was over here helpin’ to organize the Kiwanis Club and all, and he thanked me for it. And he said that about three in a row walked in and told him that I was the one that told him about his radio station. And in fairness to the candidate, I think it’s the best thing to tell ’em.

I was in Las Vegas during one city election (I guess that was four years ago), and there’s a range of about five stations down there. You’re looking for something special, and even public TV goes in on it, not only take the ads, but—I’d have one good program going, and you’d get tuned to that and you hear two or three candidates, and the next night you don’t hear a thing from them, you hear some others. You can’t remember which one is running against the other fellow, who’s in ward three, who’s at large and all. If you’re really interested, you have to go buy a paper, but you have to turn from page to page. It’s about as bad. And then wait till the last day and say, “Well, now I’ve been listening to this guy and that. Oh hell, I was kind of sold on him, but he’s running against Joe; I thought he was running against Jim.” It’s very difficult for them to identify, to use another one of our fancy words. They can tell you the ones that you’re listening to, can tell you their names, what wards and all, but without advertising the opponent they can’t tell ya who they’re running against.

But I repeat that this—I think it’s a good little thing, radio station there in Fallon. I was glad that Carson didn’t cut them out. Carson tried for a while to build up some power, but Carson had nothin’ more to offer than the Fallon station. I think the people stayed pretty well with it. In travelling a lot of people will switch to that KCRL cause they do have good music and the news programs.

COVERING THE BIG STORY

Well, so to day’s session won’t be too dry, we’ll start talkin’ about water [laughter] at the outset, and to refresh my memory I went through some of the old files to make certain that I was reasonably accurate in telling it. At the time I came to Hawthorne, the first time in the summer of 1929 for the two weeks’ stint tilling in for old Jim Fenwick, editor of the *Hawthorne News*, while they were still printing it in Tonopah. The small water system they had bringing the supply from Corey Canyon into town, very small mains, was inadequate to meet the sudden influx of people coming in to participate in the construction of the Depot. It was owned by C. B. Burkham, who owned the Burkham’s garage in Hawthorne, the Consolidated Warehouse at Fallon and one in Reno, had extensive interests. In fact, Burkham had moved to Reno prior to that time.

They would turn the water off at ten in the morning and turn it on again at six in the evening, so you had to fill buckets and tubs and the like to have an adequate supply of water during the day, and that was to maintain the reservoir in case of fire. I’ve been through the old files, which I had to do, because it was prior to my actual moving here in ’29 and although I’d been readin’ about it in every issue of the *Hawthorne News*. Here are some of the banner headlines in the last issue of the *Hawthorne News*, December 26, 1928: “Results of Hearings on Water Supply is Promising for Bright Hawthorne Future. Proprietor of System Anxious to Cooperate and Is Ready to Sell.” That was the initial movement when the start of the Hawthorne municipally-owned water system was moved off the ground. A legislative act was put through in 1929 permitting the town to bond itself and build a new and larger water system;

Burkham willingly sold his franchise. It was estimated at \$50,000 to build a modern water system.

Not dwelling on that too long, I might mention that they had difficulty in completing it. They first had on contractor out of San Francisco, and they terminated him midway through the contract, put it out on a cost-plus basis to John R. Ross of Yerington. That was the senior John R. Ross, later served as sheriff of Lyon County same time his son was the district attorney, Jack Ross, as we call him, the younger one, later federal judge in Nevada. He completed the system on a cost-plus basis, and then again the town almost went to court for final payment to Ross. On the cost-plus there was a question, as my memory serves me (and you might check with Walter Cox over in Yerington. The first time I ever met Walter Cox was when he drove the senior John Ross to Hawthorne to a commissioners' meeting one day in early 1930 to get final settlement, and the argument waged hot and heavily over cost-plus). One of the issues, as I recall, he wanted the ten or fifteen—I believe it was fifteen percent—on the plus for all the hay he'd purchased for the horses that were used on the project. The fifteen percent was also added to the horses—the team hire, and that became quite a technical argument. [Chuckling] Should the hay to feed the horses be also taxed and tacked onto the total bill, or should the horses alone be chargeable. Because it was quite obvious that without hay the horses weren't gonna get much work done, they finally reached a compromise [chuckling] and got the water system going.

From then until now, we still have problems with our water system—always through limited water supply in the canyons. With the growth of Hawthorne, that was exceeded, and we've had to punch down several wells, always seeking to meet the demands. And it

seems a never ending problem, not only in Hawthorne, but elsewhere.

Incidentally, Reno really will face it one of these days with all the arguments going on this week [May, 1976] about the sewer bond issue. Many of us out here where we have meters and where our water bills now run fifty to sixty dollars a month during the summer irrigating months, have no sympathy for the people in Reno who years ago, maybe not the present generation, but who blocked the effort to place water meters in Reno in the late 1920s and 1930s, even lobbied the legislature to enact a measure blocking it. There's just no way in Nevada that water can be equitably distributed and the users pay for it other than by meter. The flat rate is a dangerous thing, but Reno is stuck with it. I wanted to throw that in for whatever it's worth.

As I say I was rambling a little bit here, running through these files—things that struck me as somewhat amusing, so I made a few notes. This is just sort of an index or a guideline if ever you wish to ramble through, or some other historian wishes to ramble through these old newspapers and pick up a few of the amusing incidents that happened years gone by—maybe not so amusing then.

For example in a little paper like the *Hawthorne News* of March 20, 1929, two items that caught my eye; "Prohis Invade Club at Reno. Find No Booze."

The sledgehammer brigade of Nevada's prohibition squad early Saturday night battered down the barred doors of the Mineral Club at Douglas and Lincoln Alleys in Reno. The raiders were admitted and searched the establishment retrieving a broken bottle from the garbage can. No liquor was found, no arrests were made. Douglas Alley, scene of many

a Prohibition foray, was jammed for the occasion, and a traffic officer was required to allow pedestrians to move. The crowd speedily gathered when the word went out that the dry agents had entered the Mineral. Deputy Prohibition Administrator L. A. Toombs headed the raiding squad. Although members of his squad had made previous raids without result at the Mineral, it was the administrator's first personal visit to the club.

That's the way that they had to cover the bootleg stories of the day [chuckling]. And, incidentally, in that same issue was a notation where Tasker L. Oddie, our junior U.S. senator was complaining about government bungling; and he was making strong effort to protect the pines at Lake Tahoe, seeking assistance to combat the hordes of pine beetles that threatened devastation of national forests and private timberlands in California. So some of our latter day environmentalists, ecologists, and conservationists who believe that they were the first, might well go back into the history of what some of the old-timers were doing fifty or more years ago.

And just the following week—lookin' at these old files back to the water: "Construction Has Begun on Giant Reservoir." That was the headline. The giant reservoir would hold 250,000 gallons of water. Today in Hawthorne, just this last week they awarded a contract for the construction of a three million dollar reservoir, but we have not referred to it as a giant reservoir [chuckling] in this day and age.

Another interesting item just this one week later is "Air Franchise is Coveted by Many Concerns." And different aviation groups were making a pitch to the Nevada Public Service Commission to provide an air service between Reno, Hawthorne and Las

Vegas, and between Reno and Los Angeles by way of Hawthorne. Well, little came of it other than Roscoe Turner's little Lockheed plane some years later, and Hawthorne got passed by in that one. They did have that one airplane airline for a while, and the dapper Roscoe Turner, I can still picture him with his scarf around his neck, his leather helmet, waxed moustache and shining boots, without the laces—saw him with boots. And he did, I think, considerable charter flying. I know at times he would fly Governor Balzar into here, and that was in '29. Many years later, if you want to check it, we went through the same trauma with the original Bonanza Airlines which had one plane used in Tonopah, Hawthorne and Kingman; and then when they grew large enough, they by-passed us, said they no longer were on a milk run.

Incidentally, I'm reminded of a story Tom Wilson told me many years ago. He was handling the advertising for Bonanza Airlines and also for the last vestige of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad, and he said, "I have a one airplane airline, a one engine railroad!" [Laughing] He said, "Some days it's difficult [laughter] to make a sales pitch."

That same issue again shows that they had organized a post of the American Legion in Hawthorne. That caused a little flare-up because the Legion post at Mina had been in existence for some years, rather dormant, and the veterans almost went to war again, but finally reached the peace table and agreed to transfer the Post Number 19 that was started in Mina, Nevada.

The other interesting thing I found was this brief story:

Though the bill placing the appointment of the state librarian in the hands of the governor instead of the supreme court has not been signed

as yet, applications for the position are being received by the governor. He stated yesterday morning that he probably would appoint V. M. 'Spike' Henderson to the position.

And that is one I clearly remember, as a kid. Now bear in mind, this is '29. I don't know whether they had a term appointment or how it worked out in those days. The story goes on to say, "The present librarian, Frank J. Pine will be asked to resign effective March 31st."

But while Balzar took office in '27, I don't recall, or understand why that lapse took place; but apparently in '29 he decided he wanted his friend Spike Henderson as librarian, and it was called to his attention that he did not have the authority to appoint the state librarian, as the article says, the supreme court did. I thought at the time it might have been one of these three-member boards that have for so many things up in Carson City. And the story went that they said, "Governor, there's just no way you can make that appointment because you do not have the authority under the law."

And Balzar's quick retort, and here again I can confirm that by personal conversations with Fred Balzar, he said, "Well, hell, that should be no problem. Let's change the law." The legislature did change the law, and the governor made his appointment to the very important position of state librarian [laughing], which is referred to in that particular article.

Back to the Prohi deal that occurred in Hawthorne in the Fourth of July period of 1929 and it was quite a joke in Tonopah at the time. It was a big mystery that two Prohis allegedly had been *requested* to come to Hawthorne, as we heard it, by Navy officials. They did not want any illicit liquor near, in or about the federal reservation. Because it was

a holiday period, the town became incensed as the story went at the time, and escorted the two Prohis to the edge of the Walker Lake and gave em the choice of either swimming or walking [laughter]. Then all secrecy seemed to surround and shroud the whole issue, but this is the story the *Tonopah Bonanza* printed later in the month:

In a statement made July 17, by L. A. Toombs, deputy prohibition administrator for Nevada, it was said that two federal undercover men had been run out of Hawthorne. Toombs said that he sent the men to Hawthorne because of complaints received from other departments of the government, but that they aroused the suspicions of bootleggers who escorted them from the town after taking from the automobile of the two agents evidence that had been secured of the sale of liquor. No one in Hawthorne that could be found who were indignant over charges made in connection with the incident that the people of Hawthorne and the Mineral County officials had been delinquent in permitting the alleged incident to take place. Every official and every resident of the town that the *Bonanza* representative could reach yesterday, denied any knowledge of anyone having been run out of town. Any undercover person surely is always despised by the good citizens of any town, for as a general rule their type is the lowest of the low. Persons who will barter away their womanhood or manhood for a few paltry shekels are always despised by the good citizenry of any nation. It is no wonder that the bone and sinew of Hawthorne and

Mineral County residents resents the slander that has been cast upon them.

And then as a footnote it says,

Since the foregoing was written, Toombs has been transferred to Utah. Had the story told by the two undercover men been true, it seems to an impartial observer that the government would have taken some action regarding the incident.

And then there's another long story in answer to an editorial in the *Reno Evening Gazette*:

Acute indignation is finding vigorous expression by Hawthorne's businessmen and citizens, generally as a result of a recent editorial in the *Reno Evening Gazette* under the heading 'Hawthorne's Position' in which is seen not only a grave injustice, but designed cruelty. The editorial in question comes at the climax of a series of rumors and published reports of the deportation of two of the government's undercover agents which, it is alleged, occurred in Hawthorne on July Fourth. The very remarkable feature of the whole affair is that Hawthorne's definite knowledge and information concerning the incident is practically nothing. No complaint or information has at any time been placed with the Mineral County officials who state that they are without explicit or even quasi-reliable appraisal of the identity of any of the alleged principals. While the fact of the deportation and some of the more intimate details of

the affair have been confirmed by L. A. Toombs, deputy prohibition administrator, local accounts are so hazy and altogether speculative as to be without credibility value, and it is a fact that the major part of the Hawthorne citizens were without an inkling of the occurrence until the arrival of the accounts from Reno; and in the light of available revelations, the persuasion is persistent that it must have been staged from without the town. Whatever may be the facts the alleged deportation, however, keen resentment is felt on all sides over the imputation in that Mineral County and its chief town must occupy the unenviable position of wantonly insulting the federal government from which they are asking favors. Hawthorne is not a prude and expects from her community unit pretty much the same general conduct that characterizes those of neighboring towns and settlements. Hawthorne does not expect, however, to be rammed by those who have actually less to offer in the way of citizen decency and will resent vigorously and emphatically imputations of disloyalty to the government and its departments.*

So, the general story I got years later around here and all, the incident very well could have taken place, [laughing] but unlike Watergate, there was no one in Hawthorne by the name of "sources" [laughter]. And I doubt if [Carl] Bernstein, [Bob] Woodward or anyone else would have gotten anyone in

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Hawthorne to talk about that. But that was one that I thought in years to come might be of some interest, of how they handled the situations of the time.

On that same kick of 1929, I just saw a few notes here that we had our first theater in Hawthorne, and that was opened in August of '29. It was silent movies, of course, but as I've previously mentioned, I believe, the only entertainment in Hawthorne. They would have a show on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday with a change of program between Wednesday and the Saturday and Sunday. Saturday and Sunday were the same program, had your choice of going one day or the other. But the thing that caught my eye, headlines across the top of the *Hawthorne News*, point type, two full lines; "Governor Balzar, Congressman Arentz and Commander Cotter Attend the Theater Opening." [Chuckling] The governor and the congressman came to Hawthorne for the opening—this little theater that we have here in town.

I mentioned about Tasker Oddie seeking to protect the pines at Tahoe or making an effort to do so, that this man was really farsighted in my opinion. As you can tell, even though I was a great McCarran supporter in later years, I just admired Oddie to no end. I had so many conversations with him; even when I was a kid in Tonopah, he would stop and talk for a few minutes in the newspaper office. And well, he was more or less of an idol, much the same as Fred Balzar was. And as I've told Mike O'Callaghan many times, if he keeps his nose clean and does a good job for eight years, he might tie Fred Balzar's record. I don't know if I make any points when I tell Mike that [chuckling].

This is another one in 1929: "Senator Feels Nevada's Not Getting Share;" and this of course was from the *Tonopah Bonanza*, reprinted in the *News*:

Further proof that Nevada is not getting a fair break in the ruling made by Secretary [Ray Lyman] Wilbur yesterday in reference to the allocation of Boulder Dam power, is given in a wire to the *Bonanza* from Senator Tasker L. Oddie. The Republican senator from this state is strongly opposed to the ruling, feeling that Nevada should be given her share of the power immediately, rather than have the entire one hundred percent go to the three California bidders named by Wilbur yesterday in his memorandum. Senator Oddie's telegram: I disagree with the ruling which the Secretary of the Interior made yesterday in regard to allocation of Boulder Canyon Dam power. I was one of the senators who had much to do with the framing of this bill in the committee and passing it on the floor of the senate and know that the intent of Congress was to allocate, to each of the states of Nevada and Arizona one-third of this power, with the right to dispose of any unused portion of the allotment to consumers outside of their respective states, until their industries were able to use it within their own border. Nevada and Arizona are entitled to special preference in the allocation of this power because it is to be developed within their borders, and therefore is largely their enterprise for the development of their natural resources. I protest strongly against the Secretary's ruling giving part of this power which legally and economically belongs to Nevada, to municipalities and private power interests in California. Nevada is assured of an ample market for one-

third of this power which rightfully should be allocated to her.

So, I repeat that this man had foresight; he could see growth—need for having the back-up which meant power for our own development. And now we import power from out of the state, particularly in southern Nevada; we know what we have to do with that.

Back to that humorous side—or at least maybe by my distorted sense of humor—that these little things that happen and usually a one of a kind happening, not to be repeated in any other locality I know of. And this is within my own memory, but I'd rather read from this brief story about the difficulty in establishing the “horse marines” in Hawthorne. Prior to that why, we'd all heard the little ditty of “Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines” from the time we were kids, but with the establishment of the Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot, the Marines actually turned to horse patrols. [Chuckling] But it says—the heading of the story said, “Marines Brave but Fear Nags. One Leatherneck Prefers Battlefront to Mounted Position on Horse.”

Horse Marines may or may not become a reality, but either way it goes, the horses are going to have something to say about it. Any leatherneck who has jockeyed a Nicaraguan mule seems to lose all respect for four-legged mounts. The manner in which they spoke of the animals did not take so well. However, when the eight Nevada horses purchased in Elko County last week by Captain Bartholomew, were taken from the train last Thursday at Thorne station it was either for that reason or because of the attractiveness

of the wide-open spaces of Mineral County that three of the horses decided to take off, and they did. With a surly bray, they bid good-day to their newly acquired Marine friends and started in the direction of Whiskey Flats. To date the three nags are AWOL, unaccounted for and from all appearances, they will be deserters by Sunday. Indian trackers are attempting to locate them and receive the reward, but those horses just don't seem to want to be around those Marines, at least that is the opinion of the “gobs” stationed at the depot. The horses were able to break loose because of faulty and worn halters. One Marine said today that he didn't mind facing a lot of Chinese bandits or Central American rebels, but the idea of getting on one of the horses facin' the direction of Whiskey Flats—that doesn't sound so good. He said the boys'll be going over the hill against their own will.

[Chuckling] So the transition from a foot patrol to mounted patrol on horses was not too simple for the Marines.

In the fall that year, I think—no, it was midterm—the schools became a little crowded, but fortunately at that time there was an opportunity to “utilize,” you're supposed to say if you're fancy, some excess space, 'cause during the construction of the Naval Depot, they had built a school building, somewhere had found its way into the design, very nice (oh, allowed for two large rooms, basement, playground) out at the Depot. It still stands there today, used presently as a theater. it was-used for many purposes-during the war. The building was there, but then no one could find any provision in federal law or Naval

regulations to provide for staffing a school on a Naval reservation. So the school sat empty for months and when the little frame building in Hawthorne became so crowded, they made quick arrangements at the Naval Depot that Hawthorne School District would provide the teacher and the Navy would provide the building with heat and water—utilities. That was the first use of the little school building out at the Naval Ammunition Depot, and we were very thankful that someone in Washington made a gross error in including a school building [chuckling] along with the other service units that they had at the Depot. As I say, it was used extensively throughout the 1930s and especially during World War II, after the war till additional buildings could be built in Hawthorne. And since then, as I say, served as kind of a one time, I think, recreation center for some branch of the service out there and then later as a theater. It has had many uses and still sits there in use today.

The tag end of '32, of course, had many events, and we were jolted in more ways than one. I previously mentioned that on December 31st of 1932, that that's when I was given notice that my services would no longer be needed on the *Hawthorne News*, effective January first, 1933. And I later was kinda amused at the fact that it was about ten days earlier (well, it'd be on the twentieth), and the headline in our paper on Wednesday said; "Earthquake Strikes State. Hawthorne Feels Shock. Two Children Hurt at Mina when House Wall Crumbles. Gigantic Tremor Centers East of Fallon and Spreads Over Great Radius. Worst in History of this Town. Only Minor Damage Here and at Naval Depot. Trembling Continues Through Night." And where they first recorded the shock at Dixie Valley east of Fallon, that these tremors or temblors—they're

usin.' different words for an earthquake—continued all the way into March of '33. But then it was prior to March—I mean, it was determined that the center of the quake was at Pilot Mountain east of Mina. And we had seismologists or whatever they call 'em, engineers, experts coming in all directions for the next two months tryin' to study these here earthquakes, and I think some left quite abruptly when they were here during the middle of one of 'em. But this was almost a continuing situation that we had for a period of about three months 'cause the following week says, "Quake Center near Mina." I can go on for page after page of still another earthquake—another one felt, "Scientists to Study Fault and Quake Zone," "One Hundred and Thirty-six Quakes Shake State in Two Weeks." There just didn't seem to be any end to them at the time.

Along with this concern over the earthquakes, I was concerned with my unemployment. That early 1933, the winter of 1933 was one of the worst we've had in Nevada. Some weather expert may question me on that, but it just seemed to be no end to the repeated snowstorms. I know because I was tryin' to drive to a few spots setting up to organize the *Independent* with equipment. I got caught in Virginia City one day, was lucky to stay in Reno that night. I went off the road between Fallon and Schurz—slid off the road—I had some experiences during that heavy snowstorm. But, this is late in January, "Storm Sweeps Entire State." Mina had a fall of eighteen inches; Hawthorne had fourteen inches. "Two Mining Men Freeze to Death in Storm;" that was just outside of Goldfield. And all the way through the paper was about the storm, and it just seemed to be so wide-spread. And there again, that did not let up until March, so the tag end of '32 into '33 as I said we were shaken up quite a bit in many ways.

All right, this is one in '31 that again I remember from memory, I recall, and I've often kidded Emerson Wilson, now a senior and respected attorney in Reno, and he's told me many times, he wished to hell I'd forget it [chuckling], that when he embarked upon the practice of law, he found himself in the questionable position of suing his father. How it turned out was this way, and I'll just read: "Officials of Kernick Have New Troubles. Laboring Men Indignant Over Father-Son Suit After Investigation."

The usual occurrence of a father being sued by his son was described two weeks ago by the Reno *Gazette* as being a novel situation in reference to the litigation of the Kernick-Divide Mining Company. To the 'stuck' laborers at the Kernick Mill near Sodaville, it is not a novel situation, but something which they describe in more flowery language. First the suit stated that Emerson J. Wilson, only recently admitted to the bar, filed suit in behalf of Grace V. Ward against the Kernick-Divide Mining Company and its directors, which include Wayne T. Wilson, father of the young attorney.

And then it goes on, the story, about all the complaint and about the unpaid laborers; and well, I'd better stop there, but this is all about the case. But they were all kind of startled that the attorney for the plaintiff in this action was the son of the director of the defendant company.

I did find a couple of amusing things. One I'd forgotten about, the sale of the *Western Nevada Miner*, the special I had. First let me get about the "extra" -the only extra we ever printed of the *Hawthorne News*, and

we've never had one of the *Independent*. But in between issues of Wednesday, October 29th, and Wednesday, November 5th, 1930, of course, November 5th was the day after elections and the 29th was the preceding issue—issue preceding elections, and there was a bitter contest going on for the office of district attorney in Mineral County. The incumbent was C. C. Ward who had been elected four years earlier in 1926, in somewhat of an upset over Jay H. White long-time public official in Mineral County and later secretary to Governor Balzar, Adjutant General under several governors, and Ward was bein' opposed by a Fred L. Wood, who had come out from Reno to establish law practice in Hawthorne. He had previously lived in Yerington and in Fallon. And it became very heated, and as a last pitch, C. C. Ward had a more or less "special" of the *Western Nevada Miner* printed two days following the last issue of the *Hawthorne News* (last issue prior to election)—I think it was two days or at least one—figurin' that there'd be no opportunity to respond.

And so I say, that man who later became my partner, Scoop Connors, was my boss; Booth still owned the paper. He was down in California, and Connors decided that we could go with an "extra," and went to work on Friday night and printed it on Saturday. And the whole thing was devoted to the campaign, not entirely the local issue, with two long columns to the left and, of course, there's a plug for Balzar and Morley Griswold and Eva Hatton, who were great favorites, and George B. Russell entitled to be reelected as treasurer. He figured we'd better throw those in to satisfy Booth that there was a need for an extra.

But back to the bitter struggle for district attorney, in large letters in our extra of the *Hawthorne News*, to the left it says: "Ward Speaks in a Monstrous Little Voice," the

monstrous in large type and the little voice in small type. (I notice there's a wrong font o in it—pretty sloppy type.) And to the right was:

Warning: Anyone who knows politics understands the meaning of the roorback. It was first used when James K. Polk was a candidate for President and was a defamatory falsehood against his candidacy. Credited to Baron Rohrbach, the name has lived through the years. Coming as eleventh-hour propaganda, a roorback usually contains statements that cannot stand the acid test of truthfulness. If they could they would not be held back until the eve of the election. The strongest campaign contradiction, if there be any. Mineral County is not immune from this last minute propaganda. It was used four years ago, probably with some effect, as there was no method of scoring it. It is appearing again this year. The first notice of it in black and white came late yesterday, subrosa, under the disguise of the *Western Nevada Miner*. It was a sheet of political propaganda. In the same column on one page, there appeared the names of two different men as editor of the paper. In the masthead F. W. Eggleston was purported to be the editor and publisher. In the statement of ownership-management and so forth, C. C. Ward as business manager of the paper stated under oath that he was the editor-publisher and business manager. It is generally believed that Eggleston served in these capacities, although the aforementioned statement classed him as the owner only. What does

it mean: Just this: C. C. Ward has been dictating affairs of the paper for some time. And although a losing proposition financially, according to direct statements of Mr. Ward, he has kept it running for awhile. His motive was clear, and he made it public yesterday. He pictures himself as the voters cannot, but he waited until the last lap to do it. He thought there would be no way to discount his claims between now and election time. Rather than see this type of campaign go un-protested, the *News* appears today with facts and figures of great interest to the taxpayers and general voting public of Mineral County. The truth and nothing but the truth is printed in this issue. From these facts the voters are given the opportunity to draw their guide and vote accordingly. This special edition of the *News* has been prompted by the eleventh-hour roorback of C. C. Ward and the *Western Nevada Miner*. Beware of further last minute propaganda that may be produced.

Well, that was really the beginning of the end of the *Western Nevada Miner* [chuckling], and I find—let's see it was in—Ward lost the election to Wood, incidentally. And then at the end of the year [consults papers] the December 24th issue of the *News*, I believe it is, it says:

Mina paper is sold for \$300. Bidders were few at the auction sale of the *Western Nevada Miner* in Mina last week, and B. F. Baker who had secured the judgment that brought the sheriff's sale, purchased the plant for the sum of \$330.30. Mr. Baker

did not state what he intended to do with the plant, although it is generally believed that it has turned out its last edition of the once famous organ of J. Holman Buck. There was no edition published Friday. Since the death of Buck, the paper has become a mixed affair with several men purported to be the directing heads. Baker was in Hawthorne Saturday to settle delinquent tax accounts on the property. He indicated at that time that he hoped to sell the machinery.

Now, I don't know whether the Cornelius family in Mina purchased the machinery, the equipment or not. Mrs. Cornelius that I speak of, was the daughter of J. Holman Buck—Lorena Buck Cornelius. Her husband, Leslie Cornelius, grubstaked a number of men in mining, did very well at it, operated a butcher shop in Mina, served as justice of the peace a number of terms; and their residence was next to the building which housed the *Western Nevada Miner*. And to my knowledge, the building and lot, all title to it vested with the Cornelius. She is the heir to J. Holman Buck's estate.

Apparently, Baker's judgment was for the equipment only, 'cause it refers to the plant, and I think somewhere else in an early article that he had attached all the machinery or equipment. There was no linotype in it at this time, because in 1933, when Connors and myself started the *Independent* we purchased the equipment that was remaining in the *Western Nevada Miner* plant from Mrs. Cornelius. So the ownership apparently passed from Baker to her, but that was the end of the *Western Nevada Miner* at that stage of the game. Eggleston had become—well, he was ill at the time—a World War I veteran. Always used to say he must have been gassed. I don't know whether he was or not. He was

later up in Elko, worked for the state and the federal government in veterans affairs, and died just a year or two ago—Eggleston, and a pretty fine gentleman. He was mixed into it, as I say and as the article said, they weren't sure just who was the director and the guiding hand of the paper for many years. This is November 23, 1932 [*Hawthorne News*]:

Sentenced to die by lethal gas, this American born Chinese youth had his life spared through commutation of sentence. Sing and Gee John, Tong men, were convicted in December 1921, for the murder of Tom Quong Kee of Mina in September of the same year. Judge J. Emmet Walsh present occupant of the bench in this district, presided at the trial which took place in Hawthorne, and passed sentence after the pair had been found guilty. The Supreme Court of the state upheld the district court's conviction and sentence, and the warrant of execution was issued in January, 1924. Gee John was the first man to die by the then newly adopted method of execution at the state prison. Huey Sing became cook and houseman at the home of the warden and is reputed to be a model prisoner. Often he has sought parole and each time he has been the subject of many newspaper articles usually bearing a tone of sympathy. Mother side of the story is told by Judge Walsh. Gee John, a native Chinaman, assumed the mystic vows of the Tong and paid for the action with his life by ruling of an American court of justice. Huey Sing, American born, raised and educated in Carson City, had been warned against activity in Tong warfare. In

defying these warnings, he not only avowed himself to taking a life of a member of an opposing Tong, but a man who had befriended him. Tom Quong Kee was kind to Huey Sing. Friends of Kee have not forgotten this. And how well Judge Walsh realized the fact. He is firm in his belief that where American justice is not administered, it will be by the remaining members of the Tong of Tom Quong Kee. Each time that Huey Sing goes before the Board of Paroles, the judge is asked to make a statement; and each time he reiterates his opinion that Huey Sing's participation in the murder of Tom Quong Kee was more offensive than the part taken by Gee John, who paid with his life. The most emphatic statement of Judge Walsh was, 'Huey Sing deserved the same punishment as his co-defendant, Gee John, and he is not entitled to any further clemency at the hands of the Board of Pardons.' Once when it was reported that Huey Sing was not living up to the rules of the prison, Judge Walsh was prompted to state: 'Huey Sing should have been gassed at the same time Gee John was. They were jointly tried, jointly convicted and deserved the same and identical punishment.' Last week the petition of Huey Sing for parole was considered by the prison board. Huey Sing remains in prison.

That's the end of that. So I will follow this up as to his release, and then if I—I'm sure we must have something published on his death. I don't think he lasted too long, so Judge Walsh's remarks were somewhat prophetic.

December '31 it said, "Heavy Loss From Storms. Bodie Without Mail, Fighting Four

Feet of Snow. Mono County Experienced Worst Storm in Many Years. Hawthorne Not Hit. Road Conditions are Serious. Mt. Montgomery only Open Route." And that was—as we try to think back each time we have a heavy snowstorm today, well we had one in '37, yes, and we had one, I believe, in '33; but I wanted to get that one in '31 in. That was quite an item, and we would get telephone calls over the powerline as they call it. Mineral County power system maintained a little crank telephone system between Hawthorne, Aurora and Mill Creek. And the correspondent for the News at that time, incidentally, was the madam of the house in Bodie, and she was a pretty good reporter too. But like the modern day gals in Washington, she couldn't type worth a damn. [Chuckling] I don't know whether she could file, but she seemed to know everything that was goin' on in Bodie and would give us the news pretty regularly over the old crank telephone. She would call it in.

And then an event that has been forgotten by many, and it was really one of the major road improvement meetings ever held in the state of Nevada—anywhere in the state—and I was there that day. I recall it now quite vividly, and from time to time I had almost completely forgotten it and then it would come up in our area or any area. The headline in the Hawthorne News read, "Organization Formed to Back Mt. Montgomery." "Mt. Montgomery Good Roads Association is Formed Here." And there were—more than one hundred persons attended that meeting, coming from Nevada and California, neighboring California towns. And as an example of some of those who came to take part, we had Governor Fred Balzar; the man he'd replaced in office, James G. Scrugham, who was then lookin' ahead to his race for Congress that year. We had representatives from Inyo and

Mono Counties in California, and just all over the state of Nevada. And we listed the names in that issue, and, as I say, from the Reno-Carson area: J. C. Durham; William M. David; J. G. Scrugham; Governor Fred Balzar; S. C. Durkee, who was the highway engineer at the time; both publishers from Fallon, Del Williams and Claude Smith; and many more—and the southern end, Tonopah and Goldfield. And the only voice in the wilderness at the meeting was that of Adams F. Brown in Goldfield, asking that Westgard Pass be given priority and then later to try to finish the Mt. Montgomery road—the so-called Mt. Montgomery road, a very narrow, treacherous road, in many areas parallel to the narrow gauge railroad which was then running. And even as a result of this big meeting in Hawthorne and the pressure put on, the machinery was put in motion. Then there was a little division within the ranks between Tonopah and Hawthorne. Tonopah wanted to complete the leg of a wye from Coaldale to Basalt first. Hawthorne preferred to see the Tonopah junction-Basalt leg of that wye completed first. Tonopah won out. They had the horses, the votes and all that went with it, and it was quite some time before we could get the second unit. But that is the State Route 10 now, when you leave Hawthorne going south, ten miles south of Mina, go over State Route 10 to Basalt and over Montgomery. From the Tonopah end it is U.S. 6, so it leaves Coaldale to Basalt and on over. They merge there at Basalt, just a short distance this side of Mt. Montgomery but that is the present day road.

But that was a tremendous meeting they had—talkers by the dozen, lots of applause. It was that evening, I recall (it was Sunday) and, oh, they stopped for a big lunch served in town, to tell us that. And then for the evening meal, they went to Mt. Grant Lodge,

then operated by the colorful couple Mom and Pop Benedict. And Mom comes first because, believe me, she was well ahead of her time and ERA's time when it came to runnin' the show at the lodge. She was the one who would permit no liquor at that beautiful lodge out there on the shore of Walker Lake, and someone did carry a small keg (I think it was an eight-gallon keg), and had it in one of the little rental cabins, possibly the one that Baby Face Nelson occupied later [chuckling]. And so many were leavin' the beautiful veranda, kind of an enclosed porch, veranda or something, and running over to that one particular cabin. And it took a little while, but Mom Benedict found why they were all headin' for that one cabin, and I still can recall seem' Jim Scrugham and Fred Balzar sittin' on the side of a bed in that little cabin havin' a drink together and others working in and out. And when Mom Benedict found they had liquor on the premises, I'll bet you that Balzar and Scrugham both during their terms as governor never took such a chewing out as they did from that little old lady [laughing] that day! And she told 'em to get the liquor off her property; and if they persisted in drinking there, she wanted then to get off the property too. [Chuckling] A little later on I'll touch on another amusing incident in the life of Mom Benedict; but that was a great event, and it was a big breakthrough in the history. So somewhere in there anyone writin' about roads as they write about railroads so much, and the early day roads in Nevada, should refer back to that very important meeting held in Hawthorne in 1932. And there was one other amusing incident, throughout the day there was a delegation from Beatty, and one man kept insisting that he would support Mt. Montgomery, if the Mt. Montgomery boosters would support Daylight Pass. Most of the people in that room (there were more

than a hundred at the meeting) apparently for the first time had heard of Daylight Pass. He attempted to describe it. And the old-time Nevadans from southern Nevada, they're a little in doubt as to what he was calling Daylight Pass and thought it was just more or less of a lark or a gag alias. Well, he was far ahead of his time because today that is the road leading from Beatty into Death Valley, so he was lookin' ahead to gettin' it—but that was the first so many of us ever heard of Daylight Pass. It's stayed in my mind all those years.

Nineteen thirty-two, what'd ordinarily be a small town, small county election for minor office—county commissioner, there was a very close race between Sol Summerfield and T. O. McKinnon, both of Mina. And Summerfield had won the race over McKinnon in 1930, and this rematch and of course each time with a third candidate in the race. First time it was a Hawthorne man. There were three Mina men seeking that race, it was by district. The day following election, we had the headings: "Oddie and Arentz Lose to McCarran and Scrugham." "Democrats Sweep the Nation." "T. O. McKinnon New County Commissioner." It said, "Sweetwater returned somewhat of an upset this morning and elected by seven votes, T. O. McKinnon, Independent, long-term county commissioner from the Mina district. Prior to the returns from Sweetwater, S. M. Summerfield, Republican incumbent, held a margin of ten. L. E. Cornelius, Democrat, ran a poor third."

Well that election resulted in a court contest, which is another method of a recount when you ask the judge to preside, instead of a recount board and challenge ballots, throw out some, or allow some, disallow some. But it took almost a year 'fore the case actually came to an actual trial. This election contest handled through the court procedure, did not reach trial until December

of 1933, one—a little more than a year after the election. Judge Edgar Eather of Eureka presided at the hearing, and individual names were challenged as not qualified residents and up and down the line, the judge had to determine. But to me the crux of the whole contest—which incidentally the judge ruled early in 1934 that McKinnon was the legal county commissioner which he'd been servin' for more than a year—he won the case—but Judge Eather unfortunately did not rule on some of the *vital* motions, as I considered 'em. Arguments back and forth between the two opposing attorneys—Captain Walter Rowson for Sol Summerfield and Herman R. Cooke for McKinnon, and they'd been adversaries from away back in the Tonopah days and both then living in Reno. (Rowson might not have moved to Reno, but about that time he did and Cooke now located in Reno)—but Cooke raised the very, very interesting question that has today remained unanswered. It was more than a question, it was a challenge. He challenged the validity of the establishment of the Walker River Indian Reservation as a bonafide reservation, and likewise, the Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot reservation.

I believe, and I'm sure I touched on that previously—you can tie this back in wherever it is, that a court determination of Cooke's very well researched, very well documented argument in that challenge was left unanswered. The case never reached the Nevada Supreme Court, and many times I've suggested to different attorneys and others to talk to young Tom Cooke, not so young any more, but Herman Cooke's son in Reno. And he told, I believe, one or two that he has researched or searched for a lot of the old, old cases, long since decided and forgotten, but did not come across that. And probably one of the greatest remarkable examples of thorough

research went to the city dumps or buried somewhere, yet to be found, cause the issue is still alive today as to jurisdiction—voting rights and taxable rights and all; and there we had it right in our grasp, we might say, to have decided a very major issue by going on through the higher courts. And that, I repeat, was 1933, more than forty years ago. Young attorneys who were not born then are still struggling over the same arguments—pro and con. But I wanted to get that in because it was a very, to me, a very important election contest because of those additional factors that were raised during the deal.

Of course the next big event in 1932 was the start of our earthquake season, the longest one, I believe, in the history of the state of Nevada, in any area; and it was over a wide area. Right in the midst of the earthquake season is this heading: “Two Mining Men Freeze to Death in Storm.” That was down near Goldfield, but the storm was general all through this part of Nevada. And one of the incidents I remember largely in that winter (a little beyond January) and I’m reading was, we had made—Scoop Connors and myself had made arrangements to purchase the equipment of the *Western Nevada Miner* and haul it to Hawthorne to set up our newspaper, and this was in February that we were making this move, and one day while drivin’ through this heavy snow and all bundled up and (we wore the sheep-lined jackets in those days, but gloves and all) a few miles east of Hawthorne on Highway 95 south, we saw an automobile stalled, two men in business suits in difficulty; we stopped to see if we could render assistance which we could because they had a flat tire and were havin’ nothin’ but trouble trying to make the change in the snow. The two men were Mickey Kloskey [M. C. Kloskey] who was later U.S. Marshall or had some other political patronage job, who was drivin’ the

other fella, Pat McCarran [Patrick A.], south to Las Vegas, so he could prepare to go to Washington by train to be sworn in as U.S. Senator. And I think early in our taping I might have mentioned that before, but now this storm brings it home so vividly.

And we stepped out, exchanged greetings. McCarran knew who we were quite well because we had been Oddie’s strongest—staunchest [laughing] boosters during the preceding election! And we knew McCarran and little Mickey Kloskey, and why I’ll never forget Scoop Connors first remark after the brief greeting. He looked down at McCarran’s ankles and saw that under that business suit he was wearing black silk stockings and black oxfords, and his first greeting to McCarran was, “My God, Pat, if you don’t know how to travel in your own state in the snow, how do you expect to get around Washington?”

And that was the greeting he gave McCarran! [Chuckling] McCarran admitted he hadn’t come dressed for the party. We got them on their way. We agreed to meet in Mina and did. McCarran went into two or three of the bars; we went in with him to have a drink, and he wanted to thank the voters for their support and the like. But McCarran was several days before he got to Las Vegas that time; he was snowed in at Goldfield as I recall. He made it from Tonopah to Goldfield, but then was snowed in there for like two nights and a day or two days and one night before he could get on south. And that was a wild winter between the earthquakes and the heavy storms and the snow. And of all the years that we found which we had to be tryin’ to move printing equipment through the snow [chuckling]!

The next big event, where I’d mentioned a few months ago that 1931 was rather dull, unexciting other than the fights among the county officials and they were fighting all the time, was a little matter and an aftermath of

the election of 1932, and I want to find out so—and sure of my ground on this—the legislative session rolling along.

Now we're into that still somewhat controversial deal of Lyon County acquiring a portion of Mineral County and who were the good guys and who were the bad guys in the whole act. Actually it was not—it was a bitter struggle, yes, but I mean the end result didn't hurt Mineral County that much and didn't help Lyon County that much, other than convenience of a few ranchers. But here was the start of that move. Johnny Miller had introduced—I take it back—Miller seldom introduced a bill. Johnny was cagey. He knew how to have bills introduced—when he wanted something passed—really passed—he would always have a fellow Senator, a Democrat, introduce the bill for him, often Billy Marsh from Nye or John Molini from Esmeralda because the Assembly in those days were laying for Miller to cut him off at the pass on every opportunity, so he would somewhat fake his bills. He'd put in two or three innocuous bills, get them passed by the Senate, and send them over, and then the Assembly would grab them, put them into committee. They said now we've got him on that train limit bill; we'll make him trade. Well, Miller had no intention of trading out the bills that were not all that important. And, I repeat, the important ones he would slip by them, and they were a long time catching up because he worked closely with Democrats as well as Republicans in the Senate.

So this time he had it introduced in the Assembly.

Mineral County's system of electing commissioners from districts would be abolished by a bill which has been passed by the legislature and sent to the governor

for signature. Opponents of the bill are seeking to have it reconsidered by the Senate. The bill was introduced by Assemblyman Hamlin of Mineral County Friday. Before a vote was called Hamlin and Malone of Washoe County entered into a spirited debate. Malone, sponsoring a districting bill for Washoe, opposed the Hamlin measure. According to reports received in Hawthorne, the debate was quite heated. However, when the vote was called, Malone was the only dissenting voice. An effort of Malone to have the lower house reconsider the bill failed. The Senate yesterday passed the measure by a substantial majority. However, Senator Scott, Lincoln County, was attempting to muster a two-thirds majority in the upper house today for reconsideration. Opposition to the bill has developed in the Sweetwater and Cambridge section of what is known as District Number One. A delegation headed by the present county commissioner for the district, John H. Wichman, and Abe Charlebois are in Carson City seeking to have the measure defeated, it is reported here. Several telegrams in support of the bill were sent from Hawthorne and Mina today. Some of the telegrams in support of the bill were sent from Hawthorne and Mina today. Some of the telegrams were to Governor Balzar urging him to sign the Hamlin measure, the *Independent* was told. The system of electing one commissioner each from the Mina, Hawthorne, and "river" districts, the latter including the Schurz Indian reservation, has been in effect since the election of 1928.

Well with that bill sailin' through to do away with the commissioner districts, the following week we had to report that:

Ranchers and other taxpayers of the Sweetwater and Cambridge districts in the western end of Mineral County have prepared a petition to the state legislature, asking that the section of Mineral County in mention be annexed to Lyon County. A bill to this effect was introduced in the Assembly Monday morning by Assemblyman [Howard F.] Malone of Washoe County. To date no action has been taken by the lower house. It is believed it will be referred to a committee on which Mineral and Lyon Counties will have representation. The petition is brief. It points out that the particular districts involved are geographically a part of Lyon, general county business can be more conveniently conducted at the county seat of Lyon County—Yerington, and that the same is true of the business pertaining to the Walker River Irrigation District which vitally affects the ranching interests. The move, it is said, is the outgrowth of the recent action of the state legislature in repealing the commissioner districts of Mineral County. Under the law just repealed, Cambridge and Sweetwater with Schurz, formed one commissioner district. Residents of this district vigorously opposed enactment of the repeal measure, but last week was passed by both houses and signed by Governor Balzar. Possibility of gaining annexation to Lyon County by the district is a matter of question. A similar move was made many years ago, and after

meeting with success in the Assembly was defeated in the Senate by a margin of one vote. Said, 'Severance of Western Mineral County Likely. New Boundaries Agreed Upon.' From present indication it was very probable that the Sweetwater and east Walker districts of Mineral County will be annexed by Lyon County. A bill to this effect was drawn last night by Senator [J. H.] Miller and Assemblyman [M. C.] Hamlin of Mineral County and Assemblyman [Fired] Strosnider and [Frank] Bugbee of Lyon County to be presented to the state legislature today. The first bill in this proposal was presented by request of Assemblyman Malone of Washoe County last week. However, taxpayers of Hawthorne and Mina petitioned the legislature to exclude Sweetwater and other sections of land. A compromise was effected yesterday afternoon when the new boundaries were agreed upon. Briefly the annexation takes in all of the Sweetwater district including the elbow, all the ranches along the east Walker River, the Rockland mine, and the mines of the Pine Grove district and a vast amount of undeveloped land. The first measure would have taken away from Mineral County approximately 700 square miles, roughly the section to be annexed including the district from points south of the Fredericks ranch at the California-Nevada boundary line, east about twenty-one miles to the Mt. Grant range line, and then north.

I'm not gonna go into all this and that description for you, but this was the next move then on the part of the—or the counter

move—want to stop this a moment and say: the ranchers themselves, the Wichman forces we called 'em, were bitter over the repeal of the commissioner district act, started the move to be annexed to Lyon County; and then these supplemental bills that followed Malone's (Malone was a liberal Democrat out of Sparks, as I recall, and he went right along with this Democratic group), but there was the real follow-up on it, that after initiating the effort the very group that asked for annexation started mustering forces to try to kill the amended bill, and as I'll show at this moment, then further try to get Governor Balzar to veto the bill after they'd asked for it in the beginning. And this is the March 22nd issue of the *Independent*:

Assembly bill number 282 introduced by Assembly-man Malone of Washoe County by request which calls for the annexation of Sweetwater and east Walker district of Mineral County by Lyon County, has been sent to Governor Balzar for final approval. The measure was amended several times, and after passage in the Senate Saturday, was given approval by the Assembly late Monday night. Two important amendments are: measure becomes effective immediately, the office of county commissioner now held by John H. Wichman is declared vacant, the vacancy to be filled by appointment by Governor Balzar.

And the description of the annexation and all, but the final fight—and I recall goin' to Carson with one of the "pro" delegation. We were in favor of giving it away because we figured it was quite a liability. But the final step in it, "Governor Balzar yesterday afternoon signed the Malone bill which annexes the

Sweetwater and east Walker districts of Mineral County to Lyon County." And I say yesterday, this is the March 29th issue of the *Independent*, if you want to isolate these.

Fixing his signature a few hours before the time limit. Governor Balzar acted after hearing considerable arguments for and against approval. Petitions on both sides of the question were circulated throughout the county and presented to Balzar. Delegation supporting either side appeared also. Many facts and figures were presented, and after a thorough investigation, the Governor indicated that he was of the opinion the measure was sound and economical and to the benefit of all concerned. A delegation appeared before Governor Balzar last Friday in an effort to have him veto the bill. They presented a petition bearing 249 signatures. On Monday a delegation from Hawthorne and Mina was given an audience by Governor Balzar, and in addition to many facts and figures, this group offered a petition bearing 249 signatures.

[Laughing] I recall the dead heat count because a young fella, Kenneth Roach, from the river district, from the old Roach farming family over there (Kenneth's now deceased), he was delegated to represent the river side. I was delegated to represent the pro side, as I call it, to count the signatures on each petition. And we missed out on most of the fun because it took us about an hour and a half checkin' every name and watchin' it, and we went down the list on each petition. And about the only thing we agreed on, after two or three arguments ourselves whether it was a valid signature or could read it, the only thing

we agreed on was the total count. It ended up in a dead heat, as you could see from the 249 on each petition [chuckling].

And, of course, while on that subject, that was followin' Governor Balzar lost no time in appointing Oscar Gerbig, long time meat market owner in Hawthorne, to fill the vacancy, replacing Wichman. But Wichman did not give up easily. He carried the case to the court. See, I don't have the exact date, "Wichman Suit in High Court Monday." And he challenged the law, the right of the governor to appoint, the right to declare his office vacant. And in May:

In action of the State of Nevada on the regulation of John H. Wichman, realtor, versus Oscar Gerbig, defendant and respondent, which less formally is a suit in which Wichman is seeking to regain his former position of' commissioner of Mineral County, now held by Gerbig, a demurrer was filed in the Supreme Court Friday by George B. Thatcher, attorney for Gerbig. An order was issued yesterday setting the case for hearing on May 22nd, 1933.

The court did hold in favor of Gerbig and upheld the law; and that finally closed out the issue of the annexation. Of course, in that bill they had to make provisions where Lyon would assume any share of bonded indebtedness in relation to the valuation of the area they were acquiring, and then some bills and counter-bills. But the whole issue at the time (we're speaking of property valuation, *assessed* property valuation)—. That was brought right out in the bill and the original would have included about three hundred and one thousand dollars. But as the area was released—was a total valuation of about two

hundred and seventy-five thousand. So, you could see the resultant revenue, based on less than five dollars a hundred because in those days the rates were runnin' around thirty-five dollars a thousand. There was not a great deal of money involved in the whole transaction.

While on that valuation, I believe a fair figure would be eight or nine thousand in actual tax revenues; but during that same period the cost of roadwork over in that district (I looked up the figures) one year, four thousand some-odd dollars, another year, over five and up around six. So we were spending somewhere—forty percent—fifty percent of the actual tax revenue building roads, and all the roads were bein' built from the river ;district into Yerington, so the ranchers could go shopping and conduct their commerce there which is of no value at all to merchants in the Hawthorne area and all. And we just looked upon it somewhat as a losing cause. There're some very fine families—some of the pioneers of the county came out of that district. We mentioned Wichman and Charlebois, the Boerlins, Morgans, oh, so many, I can't think of them all right offhand, but very fine families and all; but they admitted themselves their ties were down in Yerington—they're intermarried and the like. And that wasn't all that great a crime, not that Mineral County was that large. After all it had been carved out of Esmeralda; it was the original Esmeralda, and not that much of a tax base, but it really didn't make that much of a difference. So that was one of the basic reasons for knocking out the commissioner districts, because the tail was wagging the dog. As Hawthorne was beginning to grow and Mina was prospering at the time, it was far—it was by far short of the so-called one-man, one-vote concept of today. There was nothin' equal in the population of the three districts. It was a very small district, and to

give Hawthorne area only one commissioner, Mina area only one and to give the few ranchers plus the Indian reservation (which was not payin' taxes) that third commissioner; that was the big beef.

Early in '34, we lost a grand old friend that I frequently refer to, Governor Fred Balzar; that was in May. Of course, the death of the governor struck Hawthorne. The death of any governor would, but particularly Fred Balzar, this being his home town from the time he was a small child and having served as an assemblyman, state senator, sheriff, before becoming governor out of the county. And it's a tribute to him, I guess you would call it, that even though the funeral was held in Reno, every business house in Hawthorne closed between one and three o'clock the day of his funeral, and they just had a little, more or less, memorial service here in town. Everything was locked up tight during those two hours that the service was bein' conducted in Reno.

I showed you earlier today the letter from the governor of New Jersey. I guess I was a young eager-beaver, would-be investigative reporter or self-appointed commentator in those days and as the country got into a bit of an argument and hassle over the execution of Bruno Hauptmann for the kidnap of the Lindbergh baby, I took it upon myself to make some comments, observations, and that is as you could see, the reply that I received from [A. Harry Moore] governor of New Jersey thanking me for giving—sayin' at least a few nice words about him when they were ready to recall. There's still in my mind some doubt if there was more than one man involved in the kidnap of the Lindbergh baby—just as there are doubts in the minds of many people whether more than one person was involved in the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Well, another election year rolled around in 1934. Of course, we had the

statewide election again in that year and our county, but the orators seemed to prevail that year at their conventions in Mineral County, both Republican and Democrat. They really had some wild ones that year, and this is: "Democrats Denounce Machine Rule." "Republicans Want New Party head." And it says:

Enjoying the greatest number of delegates to a county convention in years because of the heavy vote given the Democratic congressional candidate at the last general election, the Democrats of Mineral County gathered at the courthouse yesterday for their biennial convention.

And they go on down arguin' over delegates, members of the central committee, but—

By unanimous vote the delegates were instructed to vigorously oppose any candidates for state party leadership put forth by the Wingfield-Woodburn-Thatcher-McKnight combine or any of its cohorts. Any actions or moves of this group are to be opposed by the Mineral County delegation, the instructions specify. While this expected action by the convention was taken swiftly, the brief time it was up for discussion was ample for many present to voice disapproval of bi-partisan machine control of the Democratic party in Nevada.

Over on the Republican side, it says, "Delegates to the state convention are," and it lists all the names. Says, "The delegates were not instructed, but they informally pledged to vote for a change in state party administration

when a plan for the betterment of the Nevada GOP was presented.”

This is October 10, 1934; it says, “Suit Filed by I. J. Smith to Oust Three County Commissioners: Action Based on Purported Malfeasance in Office Conduct.” All the arguments you have going in Washoe County now about the timing of a grand jury report to a city or county election, this one was one of the old gags—a county clerk’s office did pretty well on tiling fees in those days because there was always, repeatedly, actions to oust the county commissioners. But this was another one timed just not too long before a general election on October tenth, 1934.

Just kick on in there for what it’s worth when you tie in with the CWA and the CCC camps, that late in 1934, a transient relief depot was established at Lucky Boy, south of Hawthorne. “Workers Will Supplement CCC Crews, But Purpose of Two Camps Is Different.” And most people have forgotten those transient relief camps, and as I recall, and I’m not certain, but I believe in Reno when they set one up that was near or maybe housed in the old facility of the Green Lantern which at one time was the exclusive cat house in Reno, and that because there were lots of jokes at the time, a lot of amusement over that they could not have picked a better site for a transient relief camp. [Chuckling] And so all the abbreviated agencies, I think we should not overlook; they called it a depot actually—transient relief depot, not a camp—I think got us through 1934.

This colorful Mom Benedict that I previously mentioned bein’ out at Mt. Grant Lodge, and I mentioned what a terrific, rapid-fire talker she was. Sometime she’d say just a moment, and she’d push her uppers back in and start talkin’ again. Heading in our paper April 3, 1935, says,

“Hawthorne Woman Steals Show at Trial,” (in San Francisco). Makes U.S. pay her prevailing wage for trip to Chicago. When Mr. and Mrs. John M. Benedict were called to Chicago as witnesses for the federal government in the murder trial of John Paul Chase, associate of Baby Face Nelson, this paper predicted that Hawthorne and vicinity would receive a fair share of publicity. However, Mr. Benedict was excused shortly after his arrival in the windy city, while Mrs. Benedict remained, but was not called to testify. Then last Thursday the day Mrs. Benedict returned from her trip east, she and Mr. Benedict received a summons to appear in federal court in San Francisco where a number of Nevada and California residents are on trial for allegedly harboring Nelson and Chase. Mr. Benedict testified briefly relating to the presence of the Nelson party at Mt. Grant Lodge, owned by the Benedicts, last August. Then Mrs. Benedict was called, and even the somber surroundings of the federal court could not dim Mrs. Benedict’s usual happy and jovial spirit and straightforward method of relating a story. Called upon to identify members of the party that visited her lodge on the shores of Walker Lake twelve miles north of Hawthorne, Mrs. Benedict made a thorough check of those in the courtroom, jury included, before specifying Mrs. Frances Perkins, wife of one of the gang members who already had pleaded guilty. Joseph ‘Fats’ Negri who confessed and became the government’s star witness. Then, telling the court she

was a busy woman, Mrs. Benedict proceeded with important testimony in rapid-fire manner that aided the government in bringing the case to a close. In contrast to those witnesses who were frightened and timid because of the gangster and mob background of the case, Mrs. Benedict was described in press reports from San Francisco as having stolen the show. At the time of going to press, Mrs. Benedict has -not returned from San Francisco. Last Thursday, however, the *Independent* was able to obtain from Mrs. Benedict a brief report on her visit to Chicago, her first. Arriving in Chicago on Friday March 15th, Mr. and Mrs. Benedict were met by 'Handsome' [Brien] McMahon, assistant attorney general of the United States, sent from Washington to direct the prosecution of the murder charge against Chase. One of the first things learned by the Benedicts upon arrival was the fact that the federal government pays the generous sum of one dollar fifty cents a day to witness. Quite naturally this brought from the Nevadans a report on what residents of the sagebrush state think of the low wage advocates, Uncle Sam not excluded. Following exchange of a few telegrams by officials in Chicago and in Washington, the government agreed with Mrs. Benedict that a stranger hardly could pay expenses in Chicago on one dollar fifty cents a day and agreed to a somewhat better per diem in keeping with Nevada minimum wage law. Saturday the visitors from Hawthorne witnessed the procedure of impaneling the

jury for the trial, and the following day, Mr. and Mrs. Benedict enjoyed a sight-seeing trip to all points of interest in the big city. Because of the similarity of knowledge in the case of Mr. and Mrs. Benedict, the former was excused Monday, March 17, and permitted to return to Hawthorne. The following five days Mrs. Benedict and 35 other witnesses placed under the rule of exclusion to the courtroom were herded daily into a dingy room that discredited the whole beautiful federal building. Mrs. Benedict was permitted to attend court the day Chase testified and heard his testimony in its entirety. During this week of the trial Mrs. Benedict said she spent her spare time sewing, mending, walking fifteen blocks one day, and witnessing a huge fire on another occasion. Leaving Chicago for home Sunday night, March 24, Mrs. Benedict said the trip was marred by the sight of the desolate regions hit by the devastating dust storms. Referring to this unfortunate condition and also regions which proved disappointing, Mrs. Benedict said, 'Some people may call it sand, but the old Nevada soil looked mighty good to me, and I wouldn't trade one square foot in Nevada for the whole country.' Emphasizing this declaration the Hawthorne lady added, 'Oh, yes, I always wanted to see Lake Michigan, and when I did, well, after looking at that great body of water covered with mud, I thought to myself what a treat it would be for those people in Chicago to get a look at the real spot, a lake where the water still can be seen, Walker Lake.'

So that interesting story that she did (we couldn't print it all), but she was really raisin' hell. She'd told the assistant attorney general of the United States that they wouldn't get a word out of her until they came up with a little more money, and she wasn't sellin' her testimony, but she wasn't goin' back there at her own expense either. She didn't cause the trial [chuckling], and she wasn't about to underwrite any part of it. She was really a colorful character, and I certainly thought we should get somethin' in with that other part about the road meeting when she took on anybody; she decided to chew them out and that included Balzar and Scrugham.

This may be of more interest to you than the book and all. This is in June 1935, the June 12th issue:

Schurz Indians Lose Priority Right on Water by Ruling of the Federal Court. Rights of the United States government to a 150 second feet of water on the Walker River were swept away Friday when Judge A. F. St. Sure ruled in the federal district court that the government had no basis for its water claims. The government claimed the rights to the water for the Indians at Walker Lake reservation. The decision puts an end to the long drawn out litigation of the United States government against the Walker River Irrigation District and two hundred and fifty-three landholders in the upper Walker including the Sierra Pacific Power Company. The ruling also denies the claims of the power company. St. Sure sitting for Judge Frank Norcross overruled R. M. Price acting as master of chancery would have awarded the government 26.65 second feet of water in place

of the claim to 150 second feet. The decision Friday denies all federal claims. The suit has been in the courts for the past eleven years.

And so on. What a difference the thinking was in '35 from the "pup fish" ruling in 1976.

Well winding up the 1935 side of it, why the WPA was in full force by this time. The heading says, "Local WPA Projects Approved as New Relief Program Starts FERAL Jobs End." That was the Federal Emergency Relief Administration which came in right after the old CWA, Civil Works Administration, and the PWA was also considering applications for work projects at that time. The other two items I might mention from 1935: that was the year we lost little Sol Summerfield, long time former state senator, county commissioner, merchant at Mina, and also Judge J. Emmet Walsh, he of the Teddy [Theodore] Roosevelt look-alike as he was told in his younger days and he wore that moustache to his dying day. And, of course, after the death of Walsh, why Judge William D. Hatton was appointed then.

As I say, we were havin' county fights almost as regular as they had commissioner meetings in those days. This is a rather interesting—in the middle of '36—a little earlier so we played the same old gag that some of the others had played to an election to draw voters attention, and T. O. McKinnon was havin' a rough time as an independent on the board of commissioners with the two Democrats, Mike Peterson from Hawthorne and Frank Baker of Mina. We suggested he get in an argument and get kicked out as chairman, take the underdog role 'cause the people were pretty uptight with the commissioners anyhow and that was one way to get yourself isolated and become the underdog. And he did, and it worked. [Laughing] He got reelected. Baker went

down the tube later in the final election; Peterson was the holdover, but only a one-term. And to put it this way that:

In a heated session Saturday at which the county commissioners were scheduled to take care of unfinished business of Friday's meeting, Commissioners Mike Peterson and B. F. Baker lined up to oust T. O. McKinnon as chairman, electing Baker to the position, and also voted to take over the supervising of policing duty in the towns of Hawthorne and Mina. When asked by McKinnon for a reason in making the change in chairmanship, Peterson said, 'The board was Democratic, the Republican had been chairman since it was organized, and the time had come to make a change. Observers smiled at the explanation knowing McKinnon as an independent, and he was elected acting chairman when both Peterson and Baker sought the position and would not compromise when the board was organized in January 1935.

Yes, when they both went into office in January '35, Peterson nominated himself and Baker nominated himself and neither one would give an inch, so McKinnon sat back and said, "Well, fellas, make up your mind; I'll go with which either one you want." And they wouldn't budge, so they had to compromise and put McKinnon in as the chairman [chuckling]. And it said:

The upheaval came after a day and a half of interesting events which saw McKinnon and Wilson [Sheriff Loyd Wilson] with District Attorney

Fred Wood voting against Peterson, Baker on a liquor board matter, followed by a series of verbal clashes in which McKinnon denounced the 1936 budget with its high tax rate and openly declared that it was within the power of the board to reduce, instead of increase the Hawthorne water system tax through a policy of better management. While it was evident to those who attended Friday's session that much coolness marked the opening of the carry over meeting Saturday, only those close to Peterson and Baker were aware of the drastic changes that were to be made. Sheriff Loyd Wilson was in Schuri investigating a horse stealing case when the motion was put through to remove the town policing duties from his jurisdiction. McKinnon opened the meeting as chairman, and when Hawthorne water system business and Hawthorne town matters were taken up, he launched his attack against what he termed unnecessary expenditures which combined to result in an increase in tax rate when a decrease should be in order. Peterson, who is from Hawthorne, while Baker and McKinnon are from Mina, defended the water system management by declaring an average operating expense of two hundred dollars monthly which is as cheap as could be expected. Peterson inferred that he was in a better position than McKinnon to understand the local situation. McKinnon fired back that a huge savings could be made by elimination of the hundred and fifty dollars a month water system's superintendent's job, seventy-five

dollars a month cemetery caretakers s job, and fifty dollars a month courthouse lawn attendant's job, under a plan whereby the superintendent of Mineral County Power System would be placed in charge of the water system at no increase in salary, he to employ labor on a day-basis for the actual work necessary. McKinnon asserted that watering the lawn, watering the town trees and upkeep of the cemetery were duties which easily could be tied in with water system maintenance. He asserted that all could be taken care of at an average of two hundred dollars a month and in an efficient manner. As opposition to this plan was expressed by Peterson, McKinnon brought up a motion which he offered a month ago, but lost when it received no second that time. This was the motion to discontinue the hundred and fifty dollar salary of the Hawthorne water system superintendent and place that employee on a five-day basis of five dollars a day. Baker seconded this motion; it carried with those two voting in favor, and Peterson voting against it. Peterson then offered his motion of Baker replacing McKinnon as chairman. When this motion and that pertaining to the policing duties were passed, a recess was called for lunch. And as the word spread through town of the morning's events, county affairs came in for attention worthy of an election day. It was almost six o'clock before the information reached Mina, and by eight-thirty, the main street of the town was crowded as citizens sought information and went into lengthy discussions as each bit of news filtered in.

At that same session the heading was:

Lady Barkeep, She Is Out. New ordinance places ban on feminine scale in tossing suds. After next Wednesday there'll be no more women bartenders in Mineral County. In fact, no females may be employed to serve liquor. This decision was reached unanimously by the county liquor board Friday afternoon following a heated session which resulted in the denial of a liquor license to Mrs. Jean Anderson of Mina. An ordinance embodying that provision was adopted after much discussion. The full text of the ordinance which becomes effective following second publication next Wednesday appears in another section of today's issue. District Attorney Wood moved for adoption of the ordinance and Commissioner Peterson seconded it. Peterson then proposed an amendment to set up a license for cabarets. This brought on a lengthy discussion with particular reference as to the definition of a cabaret. Sheriff Wilson said it was his belief the liquor ordinance should be given a trial without the amendment, as hasty action on the dance license would have its reaction. "These fellows are the source of income for the town funds and are paying plenty of taxes and licenses now. A hurriedly drawn regulation of this kind might corner the business for one or two fellows and freeze out some of the smaller places, I'm voting against anything of this kind," Wilson said. Peterson said he would vote against the ordinance unless the dance license be included and Commissioner Baker said he was

voting with Peterson. The vote was made unanimous, however, when it was explained that the cabaret license regulation could be brought up at any future date after all problems pertaining to the subject would have been given thorough study.

That was a very short-lived ordinance though; I think it took about two weeks to knock that one out [laughter]. It was very short-lived because it was enacted the June meeting, took two publications, so it'd be mid-June before it could become in effect. And then I note in the August 12th issue that the previous Wednesday which would be August 5th, that they repealed the ordinance banning women. So it did not have what you'd say a fair trial to become a noble experiment.

Now I stress every once in a while about these years of the storms like the '31 and the '32, and I certainly remember '32. But another big one was in '37. This whole area was again snowbound, snow covered, generally the area south of Hawthorne, Mina, out around Simon, even into Gabbs used to get them really hard in those days. I don't know whether the weather has changed that much, but at least it doesn't seem we have as severe winters. But in 1937 the heading said:

Mining Camps Isolated by
Snowstorm Roads Blocked. Although
traffic and travel considerations
have faired well during the recent
snowstorm, local industry is still
feeling the strain and it will be several
days before a complete normal
situation prevails. This situation is
particularly true in the mining field,
operations being retarded and many
personal inconveniences being felt.
Bob Randall, well-known mining man

of the Rand district, was brought to the county hospital Sunday from Rand suffering from frozen hands and feet. Although his condition is improving, he is still confined to the hospital and it'll be several days before he is sufficiently recovered to return to his home. Some concern was felt the fore part of the week for the wood-cutting crew at the Stuntebeck-Sutherland wood camp in the Whiskey Flat area. Headed by Stuntebeck, a party of men broke the road to the camp Monday and found that the crew had sufficient provisions and were weathering the storm without great difficulty.

And then under a Mina dateline and the same story:

County Commissioner T. O. McKinnon and E. N. Hansen in charge of operations at the Brucite mine thirty-five miles northeast of Luning, made a trip to Hawthorne Monday to obtain additional equipment to be used in an effort to break the snow-covered road and learn the condition of six-teen men snowbound at the camp since December 20th. No word has been received from the men since that date. And upon the return of Hansen from the east several days ago, concentrated effort to reach camp was undertaken. Continued efforts are also being made to open the road to the Simon district. John H. Simpson, secretary-treasurer of the Simon Silver-Lead Mines, Incorporated, made his trip to Mina several days ago after a thirty-hour trip during which he encountered many harrowing experiences. Although supplies were

plentiful and conditions fairly good at Simon, the period of isolation is to be made as brief as possible. Merchants of Mina are feeling the effect of suspended operation at the Nevada-Massachusetts company's property at Silver Dyke Tungsten Mine, fourteen miles south- west of Mina. The milling plant has been shut down for a week, considerable equipment having been frozen during the extreme cold days of last week. Operation will be resumed as soon as weather conditions permit, but in the meantime, the absence of the largest payroll in this section of the county is keenly felt.

I might note that the Brucite camp or mine, that they refer to, thirty-five miles northeast of Luning is now known as Gabbs. It generally went by the name of Brucite until World War II when they transplanted the name because of the nearby Gabbs Valley.

And the storm didn't pass over in just a few days, Gabbs being snowed in for such a long period that one man who had attempted to walk from Gabbs to Luning, froze to death on the way through—I could come to that in just a moment. But now we're into February, and this storm hadn't abated that much. Says:

Relief Parties to Hawthorne with Stranded Group from Rawhide Area. All rescue crews engaged for several days past in breaking the road to Rawhide and vicinity, returned to Hawthorne at eleven o'clock last night, being accompanied by several residents of the mining district for whom concern was shown when reports reached this town that several groups were in distress. Although

snow-bound several days during the past week, between twenty and twenty-five residents of the Rawhide district were found to be safe and free from danger of illness and food shortage when rescue workers from Hawthorne, the Naval Ammunition Depot, and the crew of CCC youths arrived at the old mining camp at 3:30 a.m., Monday morning. Heading the crew from Hawthorne's CCC camp were Bob Young, and Web McClanahan, forestry service employees, and John Baxter, reservist. County Commissioner Mike Peterson headed the party from town which included Al Hughes and Tom Moyle, Naval depot employees who are expert caterpillar and truck drivers.

It tells where they went around; after Rawhide they'd go around in a circle—semicircle—in some other camp and pick someone up and bring 'em into town, make sure that they were alive, well, and doin' it. And then of course I did find that out still into February.

Jack Bennett, a fifty-three-year-old resident of Fallon who had been employed in recent months at the Brucite mine thirty-five miles northeast of Luning was found frozen to death at a point between the Brucite camp and Luning Thursday morning by a rescue crew that had been sent out to locate him that day. He is believed to have died sometime Wednesday after making an unsuccessful effort to walk from the Brucite mine to Luning.

So as I say, we had some storms in those days.

Now switching from the weather problem, I noted something and one I had completely forgotten about while we were always talkin' about gettin' the price of silver increased and raised. I saw a heading, "Mineral County Lions Club Urges Stable Silver Price." But the one I really had forgotten about and was probably the closest Key Pittman ever came to offerin' to do anything for the Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot.

In 1936 and I think '37, both Senator Pat McCarran, Congressman Jim Scrugham offered two or three separate bills to provide expanded facilities at the Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot including a bachelor officers quarters [I recall], and some other expanded facilities in the mine filling plant, as we later called it—bomb loading area, all of which were rejected by the Congress as not bein' timely, although everything that they had proposed to be constructed and much more became realities after the bombing of Pearl Harbor and at far greater expense than if someone back in Washington had used a little foresight. But as I've repeated many times, that peacetime is no time to prepare for war, at least the United States' belief. We have to wait till we get into it before we're willin' to move on anything. But a new twist was added there in 1937 when Congressman James G. Scrugham proposed that the Hawthorne Naval Depot be selected as a site for the proposed storage of silver bullion by the government. As Scrugham said in a telegram to Secretary [Henry] Morgenthau (Secretary of the Treasury at the time):

At this point they're already assigned a Marine guard and other protection which would materially reduce the cost of the project, in addition there would be a saving in postage or freight for future

requirements of silver, inasmuch as the production is large in the western area. I will deem it a courtesy if you will have the Hawthorne site investigated and reported upon at an early date as to its suitability for the above mentioned purpose.

Well, two weeks later we learned that they did not have time to investigate Hawthorne because it says:

Immediate consideration of the Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot as a site for storage as the federal government silver reserve is not possible according to information given Representative James G. Scrugham of Nevada by H. E. Jolling, acting director of procurement for the Treasury Department. However, if the government's plan for concentration of silver reserve *is* expanded, there's a possibility of the Hawthorne site being seriously considered, Jolling reports.

And in his letter to Scrugham, Jolling said that they thought West Point was more suitably located. So Hawthorne lost to West Point on that ball game.

MEMORY SKETCHES OF NEVADA NEWSPAPERMEN

Now a little more on the statewide level, about some of the old-timers, say, within the span of my lifetime. I would have to quickly recall Goldfield and Matt Farrell, the man who later broke me into this business. I knew him before he moved from Goldfield to Tonopah. He often spoke of Dave Williamson. Dave

for years was the distinguished, intellectual, starched-collar editorial writer for the Reno *Evening Gazette*. Matt often spoke of association with Williamson, so it's possible that Dave was on the *Goldfield Tribune* before. Matt, incidentally, later became the editorial writer for the *Gazette*.

And of course in Tonopah, we had some colorful figures. L. C. Branson, "lower case branson" as Booth always called him, would never spell his name with capital letters and referred to as lower case branson, had gone to Ely. We moved from Goldfield to Tonopah in 1919; Pittman went—Vail Pittman went to Ely in 1920, so I had no knowledge of Vail until after I met him some—the middle thirties at press meetings and the like.

Frank Garside, I knew very well, and Garside had this colorful—used to call him a desk man; in fact he was the editor. The owner was usually out hustling business and tryin' to keep the payroll alive. Garside did some writing, not a great deal; but John C. Martin—John C. Martin had worked on the *Goldfield News* or *Tribune*, I do not know which, came to Tonopah to work for Bill Booth. But my first recollection of Martin was he was now at the *Times* with Garside, competing paper of Booth's *Bonanza*. And in his earlier years someone must have told John Martin that he looked like Mark Twain or he was a dead ringer for him or something, 'cause he wore his snow white hair, big bushy fashion, and a very pronounced white moustache. And he did look very much like Mark Twain. He would walk from his home on Brougner Avenue down to the Nevada First National Bank building, which would be the southwest corner of the main intersection of Tonopah, then cross to Southworth's store. Then cross to the Mizpah Hotel, two doors down, stop in the post office; coming out of the post office proceed to the *Times* office, take off his coat

(I've watched him do this even though I was not workin' at the *Times*, but they said it was a daily performance), put on a working vest where he had pens, pencils and the like in the pockets, and put on his green eye shade. He was not prepared to go to work until he had gone through that ritual. He was a colorful old character and a real flowery writer. I think he had come to Nevada from Colorado, worked on newspapers there. And I date this from about 1922; I don't know when Martin came from Goldfield to Tonopah, or how long he worked for Booth. The mortality rate was rather high in the *Bonanza* office. Booth wasn't the easiest man in the world to work for. Garside was a very pleasant man and always regarded as a fine boss.

Garside also had a good backup man around there, contributors—Clyde Terrell, later bought the *Tonopah Times Bonanza*, was basically a printer and miner out of Colusa, California, always dabbling in mining out at Ellendale [Nye County, Nevada], but fair printer, kind of a hurry-up type and a little snoop in his work at times, but could get the work out, and was a great one for writing mining stories. Likewise, E. N. Richardson who wrote under the byline of "Eli Norton," was dabbling in mining, playing the mining stockmarket, but would contribute stories. And, even good old Jim Fenwick who had had a brokerage office in Goldfield, then in Tonopah, and had gone broke twice. As he told me once, "Well," he said, "I was a good broker; I knew the market. My one weakness, you wanna call it one, wine, women, and song." And he said, "If I had a chance to do it over and make a third fortune, it'd probably go the same way."

Incidentally, poor old Jim Fenwick—colorful, another one of these gray-haired, distinguished, over-the-hill gang members during those fifteen months whatever it was

from August to December, maybe longer, while in Hawthorne, had one pair of pants or trousers—whatever you wish to call 'em, and I hesitate to call 'em either one—plus fours. He had grey knickers, [chuckling] and he did not have a pair of long pants during the whole time he was here in Hawthorne. How he made that one pair last, I'll never know, but that was his distinguishing mark—his plus fours as he strutted around.

Now that gave you a quick rundown of Garside's general staffing there and well balanced deal, and I should say something in there that Mrs. Garside was very active in the office, particularly the business management side, a great helpmate.

The *Bonanza* which was the pioneer paper and apparently made money (the period 1900 to 1915), Garside did bring in the *Times* then, start of '15, and I guess both papers struggled till the Divide boom, then they got into the chips again. During the twenties and I started sellin' papers in 1922, from then until the merger in '29, it was a struggle for both papers. There was barely enough business; you must recall there were no supermarkets, no grocery advertising. Everything was on credit, so why would a store advertise. Everybody in town lived on credit or scrip at the company store; they had that for a while. An' automobile advertising, cigarette advertising were about the only sizable ads that the papers carried. Well, the *Times* did have J. C. Penney. *Bonanza* did at first and then Booth got in a fight with the manager, the manager wouldn't advertise in the *Bonanza*, so we didn't even have that.

The *Bonanza* actually operated with a smaller crew. They'd have a desk man, and he was expected to do everything from write the editorials, hustle local news, write it, and also edit the AP [Associated Press] three-times-a-day service that we'd get by Western Union telegraph. It was always done in capital letters,

speeded up because the telegrapher had to move as fast as he could, had no time to shift.

Sad to say, that's a bitter carry-over from the necessity of those days to this day. Why people will turn copy into a newspaper and say, "I have it all typed up for you," and they have it typed all in capital letters (it's faster for us to retype it than it is to try to underline and mark what is to be capped and what isn't. And that is one of my pet peeves that way, and especially if they single space it)—I just want to throw it up to the ceiling and see what will come down, print what's left coming down.

And, of course, they'd have a bookkeeper, and she didn't even answer the phone 'cause they'd have only one phone. This might not have been the phone that came out of the *Bonanza* office [gesture to antique phone], but they'd have one identical to it, and that was on the editor's desk. There was no phone at Booth's desk, which was right near the front door, and he was seldom there. In the center of the little room was the editor's desk, and in the far back part of the room was the bookkeeper's desk, one of those high tilted desks that the gal had to crawl up on a swivel stool, and everybody had to adjust the stool to sit at that high desk and do all the bookkeeping, mailing out of bills. And she had a little typewriter, once in a while could assist in typing up some copy when the editor was jammed.

That was the extent of the *Bonanza* crew. It was tough on any man who took it. When I first went there when I started sellin' papers, they had a man named Patton, one arm; and that man must have been able to type between fifty and sixty words a minute hitting that shift key up and down. We used to stand (the kids) and marvel at that man with one arm with his right hand doin' all this typing [gestures typing]. Naturally it was a hunt and peck system—he wasn't hunting, he was

pecking—rapid peck system—and how he could hit that shift key and release it and go back and forth was remarkable. More people marveled at that.

After Patton left, oh, we had a young—one of the first graduates of a journalism school who'd come out from New York, and he was son, nephew or some -way related to J. Grant Crumley. And he was going to take the town by storm. I don't even remember his name—big, cocky devil. He didn't last too long. And then wherever Patton had been I don't know; he came back for a brief period.

Garside had previously purchased the *Las Vegas Review*; and then in the thirties when Jim Scrugham started the *Journal* which was short-lived, Garside had to buy his old buddy out and made it the *Review Journal*. Garside had—John Martin stayed on for, I don't know, well into the thirties, about the time that Ray Germain came down. Ray was Garside's son-in-law, and he came down and acted as the editor. The Depression hit so hard that then the combined dailies, *Tonopah Times-Bonanza*, had to drop to a weekly like the rest of us, and Ray stayed on—oh, I think up until he went to Washington with Berkeley Bunker as his administrative assistant. Gerald Roberts, just out of school, came back to Tonopah, worked with Germain most of those years that Germain was the editor, and then continued on. Well Gerry went into the service, and that's about the time that Terrell bought it, I believe. I don't know whether Garside had anybody else in there—Terrell bought it. And, of course, following the war it passed from the hands of Terrell to Bob [Robert A.] Crandall who'd had the *Goldfield News*, Crandall to Ira Jacobsen to Gerald Roberts and his son. Gerry, incidentally, after the war, returned to Tonopah and he operated a store while Crandall was operating, then Jacobsen purchased it. Jacobsen being

a mining man, first thing he did was hire Gerry, someone who knew something about the newspaper work to go to work for him. Gerry has been there ever since, still is today.

My knowledge of other publishers, editors around the state, I usually try to tie it in—met them, well for the most part, through the annual meeting of the Nevada State Press Association which is nothing more and was then just an annual gathering of the mutual admiration society to tell what great work we were doin', that we should all receive an award, and "damn the city hall; if it's out of line, we'll show them." The fearless editors and of course over a few choice drinks, maybe a couple of freeloading lunches, really believed that we were saving the state or the nation. I guess I became over-indoctrinated because it began to work out through the skin or the wrong way or something, and that's why I like to boob the present-day younger group of journalists [chuckling]. "Forgive them, oh Father, they know not what they do." And really weren't all that important and all, but there was a wonderful bunch of people, I say people because there're men and women. Persons would be the word; everything's a person now—chairperson, other persons.

Startin' at the northern tip of Elko County, Charlie [Charles J.] Triplett who'd been in the business, I think it was in Wells, and dropped out during the Depression to go to work for the highway department, had returned to Wells later and he'd had the old *Nevada State Herald* (I think his father [Phil S. Triplett] had), and then he started the *Wells Progress*, still continued by his son. His widow's still alive and is one of the owners of it, but Bud Triplett runs it now. [I've] known the Triplett's of that generation and of course, the Elko crew in those days, B. B. Steninger and Chris [M.] Sheerin. Chris and F. B.'s son, Eber [M. Steninger] later brought the paper, and then

a few years ago both retired and sold to F. B.'s grandson Mel Steninger, and Earl Frantzen, so I've known three generations of the *Elko Free Press* side.

The *Elko Independent* was Harold Hale—was listed as the editor. I think Mae [Mary C.] McNamara was listed as part owner. She was the postmaster in Elko. But that was pretty much of a political combine, I believe. It passed around to stockholder or so—most of the politicians got into the act. I think Ted Carville told me one time that he had some stock in it. All the politicians wanted to have a little button on it some way. And, of course, Harold Hale was pretty much in the political field; he was also admitted to the practice of law. I never—I can't recall meeting Mae McNamara, might've once, but I did meet Harold Hale. So the *Independent* until Snowy [Warren L.] Monroe went over from Winnemucca to buy it, just recently sold it, that's the gap of no one on the *Independent*.

And Winnemucca, of course you couldn't miss knowing Rollin Stitser. If he thought you were going to miss him, why he would correct that very quickly—big physically, also a voice and a firm believer in usin' that big voice. He would raise more hell and get us into more beefs at the press convention, and yet he had such a darling wife, Avery, who continued on after Stitser's death. But she carried on remarkably well. In fact after Avery left and sold it to the Reynolds chain the paper went to hell, as you know. They have had several ownerships. Clayton Darrah went up and tried it. Somebody else tried to operate it for rentals, and it just wasn't the same old *Humboldt Star*. And, of course, Cal Sunderland came in a few years ago and opened the *Humboldt Sun* and was doin' quite well, and I'd known Cal; he worked one time as a printer in Fallon, left the state, and this year for the first time, I met his son, and

I understand he's turned the editorial duties over to his son. So, the Humboldt side.

Down at Lovelock, the first one that I knew of, and of course that would go back to the time that I was workin' for Booth, I think Paul K. Gardner came to Lovelock about '31. We still communicate regularly by phone, correspondence. When I go to Carson, I always go look up "P.K." and he's a lively little devil considerin' age. He was at our press convention this year. So all—in those years it was Paul Gardner, and then Dickerson—Tom Dickerson and Tony Payton took it over for a brief period. And then of course the present owner, Carolyn Marshall, was Carol and Joe Marshall. He died suddenly last year, and she's doin' a very fine job there. That's my knowledge of the Lovelock paper.

We've gone from Lovelock into Fallon. There I knew—very close to Claude and Ethel Smith at the *Fallon Standard*, and old Dave Williams and Mrs. Williams of the *Fallon Eagle*. I always said the two—during those years, my contention is the two finest weeklies in the state were both published in Fallon 'cause they were very fine papers. I knew that the Reynolds chain was negotiating for the purchase of both papers to combine them in '57. As a matter of fact, Claude and his wife came to Hawthorne; we spent one Sunday together, the Sunday before they were both killed. They were coming back in two weeks. Sad thing. We'd made the arrangements to talk that day and have a good outing; they brought their granddaughter, and they with our two small girls (they were then), my wife and I and two small daughters, drove to Mono Lake; and Claude remarked it was his first visit to Mono Lake in thirty years. It was in 1957; he'd been over there in 1927 on a "good roads" meeting. And we went up in the trees on the loop—June Lake, Gull Lake, Grant Lake loop—and found a very fine spot, had a nice picnic lunch and

down to the Mono Inn for the evening and had dinner and drove back home, and they were so thrilled they were coming back in two weeks. It was the following Sunday that Claude and Ethel were hit on the highway, stopping to assist someone, and both killed at the time. And then the estate decided to make the moves since Reynolds wanted both of those papers, and they were turned into the *Fallon Eagle Standard*. And Reynolds later gave it up selling to [Norman H.] Butler. I'd met him here once or twice, and now is in the hands of Sam Burgess.

And Austin which no longer had a newspaper plant by the time I came to Hawthorne in '29, was the good old Doug [Douglas] Tandy, politician as well as the good editor, and I think it was Bill, but that fellow named [William M.] Thatcher, I didn't know him so well. But I got to know Doug Tandy pretty well.

Well, that's another story, but on with the newspapers. Skillman, E. A., I did not know. I met a Willis Skillman one time in slight passing and a little fellow named [E. J.] Moyle that had worked out there. I knew when he had the *Eureka Sentinel*, and I think Moyle probably was the last owner at Eureka; then it was acquired by Ira Jacobsen down in Tonopah as part of the Central Nevada Newspaper setup.

And, of course, movin' eastward, in Ely I knew Vail and Liz Pittman quite well. [I] recall when Paul Leonard worked for them out there and later worked in Elko, worked both places. I think Julian Epperson worked out there for a while if I'm not mistaken. And they had the daily paper; and of course the weekly paper, Charlie [Charles H.] Russell was one-fourth owner was all—he carried quite a load there because Charlie was also a politician; then when he would come out strongly for the working man, so to speak, but particularly the

silicosis'd be embraced within the industrial insurance bill as an occupational disease, he got roughed around a little from, we might say, the big boys. And his uncle owned more of the paper than Charlie did, and at times I think he had difficulty understanding Charlie's almost moderately liberal tendencies [chuckling] as against the old conservatism of Mr. [Neil] Chapin. Of course, eventually the *Ely Daily Times* acquired the *Ely Record* after Charlie and Vail both became quite active in politics, and the *Times-Record* were passed into the hands of the Reynolds chain and is still owned by them.

I'm tryin' to skip around to those little small places without gettin' involved with the two cities. In Pioche or Lincoln County, that could do for a story itself sometime, I believe, because I knew E. L. Nores and E. C. D. Marriage both very well. When I first met Marriage, he then had the *Caliente Herald*; he started it in about 1928 when I was in Tonopah. I think it was some time later that I learned that Marriage had worked for Nores for a while over on the *Pioche Record* up in the county seat, Pioche. And then Marriage later became state librarian; in fact, I believe it was [Richard] Kirman who appointed him, and he might have followed Spike Henderson. Fred Balzar might have paved the way for Marriage [chuckling] to get it. But E. C. D., he was a typical little Englishman with clipped accent, and you had to slow him down if he got a little excited and talk to him, but a gentleman all the way through. And Nores, who apparently came from old line English stock, but by way of the southern states, and with that half southern accent and sometimes a trace of the limey in it, and I'm always reminded of one of Nores's many prize stories.

It happened in the Riverside Hotel Bar, and Nores was in there and campaigning great, doing well; we got to talking, and it was

the first time that Floyd Lamb had opposed Nores for state senator. And we always called him “Judge” he’d been Justice of the Peace, Judge Nores, and ‘cause he had reminded himself and reminded us that he’d been in a “spot of trouble” before (with a southern accent, “a spot of trouble”); that’s where I could pick up this little English background on him—which he had been. He’d been removed from office—some way of, I don’t know, not keepin’ the books right or a little delayed or something, but anyhow he was ousted from office, ran again in the fall and was reelected as Justice of the Peace. An’ he says, “I’ve been through this before. I think I can take care of this dirty little Mohmon bahstahd.” [Laughing] That’s the way—he always called Floyd, the dirty little Mohmon bahstahd [more laughter], and Floyd is as large or larger than Nores. To this day whenever I see Floyd in the state legislative hall or anything, he’ll smile or be comin’ over, I’ll say, “Why, you dirty little Mohmon bahstahd.” He just shakes his head. He knows who started it; it was old E. L. Nores.

And one I’d had no experience with, ‘cause I’d never been an Nores’s drugstore, though I’d been to Pioche two or three times, but they said that during the Prohibition days that he had a drink that was exclusive in that part of Nevada or that community; and you had to ask for a “Green River.” I mean if you wanted a little flavoring in your glass of water or your ginger ale (they didn’t have 7-Up in those days), why you called for a Green River and you might get a little belt of whiskey in it. That was another [chuckling] sideline. He was a colorful character, had a drugstore with the JP—uh—maybe did a little peddling on the side—the state senator. So to finish the Lamb story, and I have to get this one in. Then he says that he’d been in a spot of trouble before and referred to Floyd

as the name I’ve given ya, and he says, “He thinks he’s smart, knows politics just because he’s got Cliff Jones backin’ him. Well,” he says, “I’ll show him.” He says, “I got a betta man than Cliff Jones backin’ me; I’ve got Marion Hicks.” Marion Hicks and Cliff Jones were partners! [Laughing] So Nores claimed that even though Cliff was supportin’ Floyd that Marion was supportin’ him. That was gonna be his big winner.

We’ve covered Lincoln County, purposely excluding Clark and Washoe until we get the “cow counties” taken care of. They should be taken care of first; they’re more important—sneak that one in there for a commercial. I’ve given you Tonopah. The Goldfield period, as I told you, A. R. Hopkins and Crandall were the only two in later years—you’d have to get some directory of newspapers. I believe the Goldfield Deep Mines eventually wound up with the *Goldfield Tribune* and *News* before they started passing it into one man ownership after Deep Mines shut down. And I say I knew A. R. Hopkins and I knew Bob Crandall. That was the extent of that.

Coming north I’ve given you the Tonopah side of it. I’ve previously mentioned outcroppings from Tonopah—Garside and Gilbert—*Gilbert Record* and later *Tonopah Mining Record*, Booth with the *Quartz Mountain Miner* that I knew of in my time. All those earlier ones that Booth had, the *Blair Booster*, he had another one—and *Lucky Boy Mining Post*, those were all before my time, so anyone would have to look in a history book to get those.

J. Holman Buck I knew only slightly. When we came from Tonopah to Hawthorne, he had become inactive. I think he had turned the paper over to Eggleston about 1928 or possibly a little sooner, but I think it was sooner than 1929. I did know his daughter, Mrs. Cornelius very well. I have

mentioned we purchased the remnants from the *Western Nevada Miner* plant from her. She is now deceased as is Mr. Cornelius, but their daughter Mrs. McCardle still lives in Mina and frequently is a source of historical information through pictures and articles, papers she has retained from the family.

Now swinging back north to Yerington, I knew Jack [J. A.] McCarthy quite well while he had the *Lyon County Times* and had known Walter Cox since 1928. His dad was still alive and active in the business then, Frank Cox. I recall the first time I ever met him on a trip to Yerington some time in 1930, early 1930. I went in to say hello to Walter and the old man who was far more crotchety than Walter can ever be when he wants to be, and asked Walter, interrupted the conversation, said, "Who's he?" pointing to me.

And Walter gave him my name and said, "He's with the newspaper down in Hawthorne."

And old Prank Cox's response was, "It's not much of a newspaper they're turning out down there." And with that he left. I don't think thereafter I ever spoke ten words to old Prank Cox, Walter's Lather. He didn't want to be bothered with anybody, and I didn't want to be bothered with him, so we kept it on that basis [chuckling].

I always recall when the old man died, they carried out his last wish. He insisted that he be buried from the Episcopal Church in Yerington, and one of the reasons he gave is he didn't have any church himself. He thought maybe that'd be as good as any, but he said mainly 'cause, he said, "There's too damn many Catholics in the family already, and I don't want to be bunched up with them." So they honored his wish, and they buried him from the Episcopal Church in Yerington, [laughing] and when you get to Walter, ask him about that story.

I skimmed rather lightly over Jack McCarthy while he was at the *Lyon County Times*. I should have mentioned that I knew his sister, Rita Millar, quite well, and she was just as much an active part of the *Lyon County Times* as Jack was and could operate a linotype, could write, read proof, do bookkeeping. She was just an all-around wonderful gal; and Jack's dad, old J. A. McCarthy—the judge, as they called him, I did not have the privilege of knowing. I've met him once or twice; he had left Hawthorne, was in Yerington by the time I had come to Hawthorne and then, I believe, on into Reno. I'm sure it was in Reno that he died; it was in 1938. They brought him back to Hawthorne for burial.

We had a little, it was a tiny Catholic Church right on this lot that we're sitting in the building now. This was the location of the church. It was a little church they had brought over from the town of Mason—that's where they brought it, and because I recall they could not get the coffin and the pallbearers in the front door at the same time. It was a case of two gettin' inside the church holding one end of the coffin and two more at the other till we got it back on the dolly—the mortician's dolly—and then wheeled to about not more than twenty feet which is at the front of the church by then. We were a little crowded that day, but they did bring the old man back home to Hawthorne for burial, old Judge McCarthy. You'd be able to fill in a lot more on that after you talk to Walter Cox 'cause he was personally associated with 'em, competed with 'em, bought them out, and he knows far more about that than I do.

Up the road—the one we must not miss in Lyon County is old man [A. E.] Haines who had the *Nevadian Times*, but there was always a dispute over the name he gave his paper. It was at Fernley, I believe, and Wadsworth another one—in that general area,

but whether it should have been the Nevadan Times or the *Nevadian Times*, but there was an “i” in there and that caused more attention than any of the news that appeared in that little paper. He later had the paper in Carson City for a brief period, A. E. Haines. And I had met him only once or twice.

Swinging back over to the Gardnerville area, I considered Bert Selkirk [*Gardnerville Record*] a very fine friend and a very fine man and an outstanding newspaperman. Bert Selkirk was one of the better ones of our time.

In Carson City I had known E. T. Clyde, very much of a gentleman; and I don’t remember now whether Clyde had the *News* or the *Appeal*.^{*} I think his—well, the opposite one from the Mighels family, but I met Roy R. Mighels—in fact he ran for state printer one time, I believe it was Roy—then Hal [Henry Rust III] later worked for the highway department or for the state in some capacity. And when the—I can’t even recall whether it was the *News* or the *Appeal*, but one was coming up for sale or lease, and George Sanford, the third brother of the triumvirate on the *Gazette* (Leigh, Graham and George)—and George did own an interest in those Reno Newspapers too, practicing law, and I drove to Carson just prior to startin’ the *Independent*.

And I recall there was an engineer or a draftsman doin’ some work in the back of George Sanford’s law office over toward the library side. Apparently he couldn’t afford to pay rent, out of a job and doin’ some work; I met him that day, did recall the name, but not till sometime later. But the engineer-draftsman was Robert Allen (Robert A. Allen), who had been apparently replaced by Balzar as state engineer. He had one job first, later, as we know, came back as state highway engineer. He had been state engineer, then state highway engineer under Carville.

But my deal with George Sanford was that (I’m sure it was Mrs. Mighels that sent me there, whoever was the attorney; it wasn’t the Clyde side of the family, it was the Mighels), but to try to take over the *Carson Appeal*, and she was very gracious and Sanford was very encouraging; and there again that famous missing link that I’ve been missing most of my life was a matter of money. I had nothing to offer as a down payment or good faith money or anything else, but they were ready then to just turn the paper loose and maybe sell it or merge it. It was up for grabs, but I didn’t have a big enough grab and I didn’t get hold of that Carson paper. So it was those early thir—well it had to be prior to March first of ’33. The name I remember, I believe, as acting as their editor was Dan Senseney—fellow named Dan Senseney was workin’ there at the time; and he was leaving, and she was in kind of a quandary. Well, I didn’t swing it and came back.

That was the major split between Vail Pittman and Art Bernard. I’ll take that back—I’m gettin’ my—if you’ll recall that Pittman and Jerry Donovan when they fired Bob Allen, Bible stayed with Bob Allen, but he lost out. Now it wasn’t Allen—there was some other office to be filled and apparently had to do with NIC—Art Bernard could fill you in, tell ya on that if it means anything—but it started a bitter division in the Democratic party. These are things that led up to Pittman’s defeat by Russell, contributed to it.

First, Bob Allen’s friends were very much incensed that Bob would lose out under a Democratic governor and by the two-to-one vote, he did. Another position came up in which the state mine inspector served on the same board, and Pittman and the third

^{*}E. T. Clyde has the *Carson City News*.

member were agreed on either getting rid of someone or appointing someone, and Art Bernard balked and objected. And that is when the machinery was set in motion to dump Art Bernard in the primary election in 1950 for the reelection for mine inspector. And Art Bernard could fill you in much better than I, and that's how he happened to switch over to the Russell side and later was rewarded by being made warden of the prison. But if I didn't kick that in right there, I'd probably forget about it. And you could ask as long as Bernard is still alive and around; he could fill you in better on that, if these—in some historical reference—not in all this yarn you're puttin' together for me, but threw it out for what it was—.

Back to the newspapers. Those in Reno (don't want to take too much time on this) but the first meeting in '29—first time—it was '25, I walked through the shop with Fred Ninnis, Jr. I think it was an uncle of his, Whiddett, who was the foreman of the shop. George Smith had gone over as postmaster or was buckin' for it; he had been the foreman or superintendent of the [*Reno Evening*] *Gazette*. And then four years later in '29 I made my next trip back in; I met Graham Sanford and Leigh Sanford and John Sanford and Bill Sanford and Joe [Joseph F.] McDonald and Frank Helmick. And Joe Jackson might have been working part-time and was going to the University, but that was pretty much the crew except on the mining desk, it was either Charlie Higgins or W. T. Ritchie, I believe it was; but they were both old-time mining writers which is a specialized field. And from then on I have known practically the whole gang, the pre-war crop of Joe Jackson, Julian Epperson, Denver Dickerson, big fella named McGill I didn't know too well. But all that crowd I knew, and that's gettin' into contemporary times. They can tell their own story if they wish.

On the [*Nevada State*] *Journal* side, I remember goin' in the *Journal* once while Scrugham still had it, I think, had it from [Emmett] Boyle, but I had met Scrugham when he was campaigning for governor in '26 and then again in 128. But of the early birds on there, I remember particularly Frank Sullivan from the turn of the thirties there (Frank Sullivan, a big crazy character Earl Leaf, and a number of the boys in the press service), Carroll Cross was one, fella [Herbert] Yocum or something like that—but used to go and visit a lot of those, right on up to [F. W.] McKechnie. There was another Mac in there, came up from Texas. McKechnie was supposed to have been a big shot from California and had it for a short while, and then this other Mac. I don't know which one had it in '38, but it was one of those two—McKechnie or the other Mac—when they came out with the big spread, the circular I showed you last time, "Don't Put the Cross on the Capitol." That was the era just before Speidel moved in in '39.

My first knowledge of Las Vegas, was when we would get the exchanges in the *Bonanza* office. And, of course, the old dean and patriarch of the newspaper field in Las Vegas would have to be old Pop Squires—C. P., I believe were his initials, and with his *Las Vegas Age*; and like all early-day weekly editors he had to double and triple in brass. I guess he'd get in on some of the land sales of those early days, not the big money ones, and tryin' to hold onto a job, not necessarily as a basketball referee at his age, but maybe a census taker—they'd do all these things on the side to make ends meet. And it was quite a few years before I had the privilege of meeting Pop Squires, and he was coming through Hawthorne on his way to Las Vegas; and I believe at the time, even though he was a staunch Republican, I think he had hitched

a ride with Harley [A.] Harmon, or Harley Harmon Sr., that is, had asked Pop to make the trip with him.

The Corkhill family had the *Las Vegas Review*, and some years later I met Mrs. [May] Corkhill, but this was after she had sold to Frank Garside. And I think she and her husband owned part of the paper, and Mrs. [Florence S.] Doherty enters into it somewhere there. Her son later was with the highway department for many years. And, of course, I had never met Al Cahlan. He'd gone from Elko to Las Vegas after Garside acquired the *Review*, but I did not meet Al in 1930 or '31 when they had an American Legion convention in Hawthorne. And then he was up around the legislature in '31; I met Al. It was two or three years after that, that I met John [Cahlan], so I knew the Cahlans. I've mentioned Garside from Tonopah. I've mentioned Ray Germain, and then of course, Scoop Garside—Frank's son Sherwin came into the picture.

And Tommy Wilson that I previously mentioned from Reno with the advertising agency and all, really got his start in the newspaper field. He worked over in California. I believe it was around Salinas, somewhere in there. And Tom worked on the *Las Vegas Age* for Pop Squires and had some interesting experiences during that pre-construction Boulder Dam period. And Tom has a lot of skeletons buried in a duffle bag about some of those exciting days in Las Vegas in the 30s [chuckling].

And from there on up to the contemporary time I've watched so many of them come and go. My first meeting with Hank Greenspun was at the old *Free Press*. The *Free Press* started about 1950 because I think Garside sold to the Reynolds chain in '49. It was a short time after that that the beef came up with the typographical union, and the *Review Journal*

went open shop. And the International Typographical Union put up some money; I think they had a separate corporation called "Unitype," or some odd name like that, to help the union men start their own paper, little brick building, oh, somewhere over near Commerce Street or South Main. And I was there when they were printing their first edition, happened to be in Las Vegas that particular week. They were gettin' out their first edition of a little weekly paper. It was called the *Free Press*. Ray Germain was working on it; "Hecky" Heckethorn, who was later chairman of the NIC—Clarence Heckethorn; Scoop Garside was up there; Ray Germain was there and lookin' around because Scoop and Ray had gone into the job printing business (particularly Scoop), but they were partners in it. Well, Ray was anxious to help his former associate get started with that new paper. I'm not gonna use the expression it was short-lived, but it was a struggle from the start with the union pourin' money into it; and just as a fledgling paper found the competition really tough from the RJ [*Review-Journal*]. And that's about the time that Greenspun stepped into the picture and took it over. An ironical twist of that, that's one more paper that I missed, because Charlie Russell had been defeated by Walter Baring in '48 for Congress, and was more or less out of a job and lookin' for one. Jack Carpenter who was working with Walter Cox over in Yerington came up with the idea that he, Cox, and myself—and he got hold of Russell and Russell was supposed to get into Indianapolis, Indiana, and talk to the top officials of the International Typographical Union to see how much money it would take to swing the deal of takin' over their little newspaper in Las Vegas. By the time Charlie got to Indianapolis, Greenspun had been there ahead of us.

And Greenspun who had been publicity man and apparently fairly close to the Cahlans and the RJ in general, was now ready to branch out on his own; and he took over (I guess I'm a little late there—this had to be about '49 before Charlie ran for governor or maybe it was early '50), and Hank took over the *Free Press* and started the *Sun*. So I've known the crowd since then.

You mentioned old-time newspapermen. I've mentioned the wives of some of them who helped, particularly Liz Pittman, Avery Stitser, Mrs. Selkirk, Ethel Smith, and all. Right today, there's still one that in the opinion of many is the real backbone of the *Sun*. Don't give a damn what Greenspun says, what Bryn Armstrong or any of the rest of the big shots say, that Ruthe Deskin has been the real backbone and brains of the *Sun* in the opinion of many of us older chauvinists, as you might call it. As a matter of fact, this last year after I'd said something nice about Ruthe in one of my columns just prior to the press convention, I received a letter from the nationally-syndicated columnist Robert S. Allen, one of the founders of the old "Washington Merry-go-Round," but later a bitter enemy of Drew Pearson because of the division that took place while Allen was serving overseers. And here's the jist of it to show you that Ruthe is with honor beyond the boundaries, as well as within them, and he said, "Warmest congratulations on your lovely and much deserved tribute to our mutual good and grand friend Ruthe Deskin. I was so delighted to run across that accolade in your column which I never fail to read and always enjoy, and I just had to take a few moments to let you know how truly much I appreciate and gratefully tip my hat to you and that great and grand lady. Ruthe sure is the *Sun's* brains department to say nothing of the few other highly outstanding and vital departments.

She is not only a brilliant journalist, but a lady of rare quality and integrity. I count myself truly fortunate and blessed to be able to call her a friend, There's none better in or out of newspapering, and the same goes for her grand husband, Jim. They are a rarely distinguished and exceptional couple in these grubby times." And I thought that was quite a tribute to Ruthe from a nationally-syndicated columnist.

So you see, some of us old chauvinists aren't all that bad. We recognize [chuckling] that once in a while that the real brains rest with the gals.

Well, that is about the quick round-up I can give. I haven't gone too much into the—oh, the many, many AP [Associated Press], UP [United Press] boys, wire services that have come and gone. That's like tryin' to remember all the vice presidents of the United States, just tryin' to remember so many. There were some fine fellas; I worked with quite a few.

One of the things that might be of a little interest, that Claude Smith and I grew to be very close friends, and I recall talking—something came up one time about the Ku Klux Klan, and Claude grinned and he said, "You know, I belonged to the Klan."

And I said, "Yeah, an awful lot of fellas did, Claude, and where was this?"

He said, "In Fallon." He said, "We had a pretty good little—" (Grand Kleagle—now what's the title, but whatever they called the cell), but Claude filled me in on quite a bit of information on the Klan in Nevada and how serious and sincere they were. With these clouds hangin' over that Al Smith might in a couple of years become President of the United States, and they were damned concerned, and they wanted to do something about it. And at the time he'd tell me this, he could look back and laugh about it. He says,

“After all,” he said, “Jack, you must remember, I was raised in Kansas. An’ a pretty rough part of the Bible belt, and even though we hadn’t seen them, we didn’t have to see them to believe. We were no doubting Thomases.” He says, “We knew damn well that you had rifles in all those church basements, and when the signal came, you were gonna take over the country.” [Laughing] He said that was the way he was raised, and he said now he could look back on it and really chuckle and snortle and tell who belonged to it.

The Klan was based on fear. They had a unit in Tonopah. This Matt Farrell that I speak so highly of and all, he joined. And Al Smith had come so close to winning the Democratic nomination in 1924; I don’t know where that one was. I think ’28 was [New York], but the long, more than one hundred ballots between [William G.] McAdoo and Smith, that it more or less put the country on notice that the Catholics, particularly the Irish Catholics, were about ready to make their charge and going to take over the country. And so between that period, particularly about ’26 to ’28, it really peaked; and they had a unit, as I say, in Tonopah and Caliente, Fallon; I think Elko, ’cause I tried to pin Al Cahlan down one time to see whether he belonged and he wouldn’t say yes, wouldn’t say no. And Reno. In fact, one fellow marchin’ in the parade in Reno one night with his flat waffle feet (and it wasn’t Ken Johnson—it was long before his time), was recognized by some of his fraternity brothers who happened to be of the Irish and the Catholic persuasion; and they got him back to the fraternity house that night, and they damn near drowned him. They tubbed him and tubbed him well, and he was pretty close to borderline. The way they recognized him under the hood and the sheet, was his feet [chuckling] gave him away. And so it was just one of those eras that we had

to go through and did, and I think survived, makes the country stronger.

Matt told me an interesting story about Tonopah, that one reason he dropped out, they wanted sixteen dollars and ninety cents for this sheet—the hood as they called it; it was a sheet with a little hood cap with an opening for the eyes. And the manager of the J. C. Penney there—and he wouldn’t say whether he belonged or not—but Glenn Jones was furious when he found out they were askin’ these poor Klansmen to pay for that sheet because Jones claimed he could sell ’em the same sheet for a dollar ninety-five, and that any good seamstress for a dollar could put the hood on and cut the eyelets and a place for the nose. [Laughing] That was one of their beets in Tonopah, was the high price of the operation. But, I think they just met as a defensive unit or organized as a defensive unit to stop this charge from overseas, you know, that the Pop’d come over in a submarine or surely not in the *Britannia*; he’d have to take a different type of ship, and they didn’t have helicopters or jet planes in those days. And that was about the size of—we look back now over a passing item for maybe a month or two, it wasn’t; it lasted three or four years. And it was very tense feelings. It did develop bitterness among a lot of erstwhile friends, some that were a long time in healing. And I was old enough to remember—am old enough to remember—the peak of it being of high school age and all; and then, as I say, fortunate to live long enough to meet a great many men who did belong at that time.

If you’d roll back the years, they probably wouldn’t have wanted to associate with me at the time because I happen to be on the other side of the fence. The Klan in Nevada was geared more towards stopping Al Smith or any other Catholic from making a charge

for the presidency. The Black and Jewish side didn't enter into it, as it did in the southern states. Although I think that it did have an effect on Sam Platt's race in '28, because until that '28 election when Platt was running against Pittman, I didn't know that Platt was Jewish, didn't give a damn. I wasn't old enough to vote, but they brought that fact out rather strongly. I heard even Republicans throw it up—not to Platt's face. They weren't men enough to throw it up to his face, but behind his back they'd talk—"We don't want a little Jew in there."

Claude was always one—the first one to answer the call to assist another publisher in distress. I know he did it for Booth even though Claude and I were very close friends, and Booth couldn't get his paper out, had a fight with his son and he'd take copy over. Claude would go ahead and print the paper for him, so he wouldn't lose his legal standing. And he was that type of man. I have the highest praise for Claude Smith.

We were talkin' earlier about Al Cahlan's experience in the criminal libel field or civil libel field. He was sued up in Elko, and not long after arrivin' in Las Vegas, he ran into another one. And this was filed by the sheriff of Clark County at the time, Sam Gay. And I have never been able to determine the final settlement, but I understood there was a settlement on that case on one or two points. I could have found out if I would've asked Frank Garside, but he's no longer around so I can't. Well, generally I figured it was none of my damn business, so I didn't do much inquiring about it [chuckling].

I knew nothing unusual or strange about Pop Squires—really too distant from those southern Nevada areas. I have mentioned about Terrell doubling, tripling in mining and printing and being an editor. I told you earlier about Carside winning first prize in

a parade with a still in the back of his old topless Cadillac with the slogan "Moonshine Sheet flown the Street," and it drove Bill Booth furious.

The Sanford story is a story in itself from old Graham (I say *old* because he was the older generation). There was a real gentleman, that Graham Sanford. He would attempt to give the appearance that he was gruff and no bending, no flexibility; wanted something done right now, and he had a habit of sittin' in that little desk in the old Gazette building on Center Street, facing the wall as you sat to his right, and he'd look at the wall while he was askin' questions. When he turned, it was almost like a roar of a lion, make ya just about wanta jump out of the chair, and yet he helped more small publishers from Booth, I know, right down to myself. And he was that type of man. He was exacting, demanding in knowing what you were gonna do, if you knew what you were doing, or how to do it. But once satisfied, why, he was a great friend and could be a benefactor. And Leigh, the softspoken, just as much as Graham, was the same way. We often kid son John for tryin' to imitate his dad, and does a pretty fair job with that deep face and gruff voice of his, but we've always told him his bark is far worse than his bite; and he's got a soft spot there, too. And where his brother Bill [William C.] now in the practice of law, but still one of the old Gazette crowd, Bill had the same low-key approach, or has it to this day, that his Uncle Leigh had. He never attempted to come on that real charging baritone, bass, or "get outa my way" idea.

Joe McDonald was another one that I had a close association with for many years, some damn good arguments with him, fight and battle over politics, sometimes over the domination. Particularly after Reno

Newspapers acquired both papers, Joe and I would have some good go-arounds about the big octopuses as Walter Cox named them, and that they lacked something along the road as a chain; no matter how much they tried, no matter how many local people they hired, that didn't have that same local touch that the *Gazette* had under the Sanfords.

HAWTHORNE HISTORY

THE 1930S

Business was rather rocky and rough those—well almost throughout 1930, but in spite of the roughness of the business, and I recall I was workin' for thirty-five dollars a week which was not too bad in those days, when we got paid. We had to collect—we had to do the business, do the job printing and see that it got collected or we didn't get paid. It was one of those situations that was pretty well accepted in those days. But aside from our first year, first full year, in Hawthorne, 1930 did have some excitement.

Important event of 1930 was the contract was awarded to rebuild the highway from Hawthorne to Schurz around Walker Lake. It was the first major improvement over the little old dirt track that had been built between 1919 and 1921 which was the first road around the lake. Isbell Construction of Reno had the larger share of it from Schurz through the cliff area coming south. Dodge Brothers of Fallon had the contract from what's known now as the Dutch Creek ranch into Hawthorne. So

that was a great development of 1930, was the building of the first two-lane road around the lake where you did not have to do as you did in the old days of Lake Tahoe and Cave Rock where you pulled out and let someone go by. That was quite an event.

And, of course, in 1930, it was election year. It was the first election—I was still not old enough to vote, but I didn't tell everyone that—envisioned myself as an active politician and frankly I did a lot of talking, whether I had a lot to say or not. I was writing editorials in my first active participation on that line of being the editorial writer in an election campaign. And, well the Democrats pretty well took over Mineral County. It had basically been but a fifty-fifty deal (I'm speakin' of local offices), but the county as usual stayed with Fred Balzar, their—favorite son, in his bid for second term as governor. And meeting all these people was quite a thrill to me, both offices. They would always do the caravan style of traveling in several cars, makin' a tour of the state, following the pattern set by Tasker Oddie in 1910, when he made the first tour

around the state in an automobile. And so all in all, I'd say 1930 was, lookin' back now, was one of the most eventful years spanning a period of forty-five years.

One of the other things I might mention. We'd occasionally have the prohis come to town, and if we spotted them first, we alerted the few small bootleg joints we had, it was nothing lavish or elaborate, just simple little bars.

Moving into '31, I made a few notes here 'cause after about forty-five years you're not always sure which year it happened [laughing]. More contracts were let at the Naval Depot, but more in the line of finishing, installing equipment, doing this, doing a number of things—well, just finishing work. Like you build a house, then you have to furnish it and maybe hang some storm doors or something. It was down to that level.

One of those contracts, I recall, a low bidder, the contractor did not want to honor the four-dollar-a-day minimum wage requirement, and he thought he could circumvent the Nevada law by having each ditch digger contract day by day and pay him on a footage basis; depending upon the number of feet of ditch he could dig in a day, he would be paid on that basis. Well, some of the ditch diggers possibly made a little more than four dollars a day, but some of the poor devils ran into hard rock, just a pick and a shovel, had no equipment. They weren't contractors; these men had been out of work until they went on that job, and one man brought to our office a check for eight hours' work that they'd given him. It was a dollar and thirty-six cents. I can see it almost as vividly today as I could then. Well, my partner—he was not yet my business partner, but we were workin' together for Booth at the time—Scoop Connors, John Connors, always known as Scoop, and I went to the phone

office and called Fred Balzar. (And when I say went to the phone office, you must recall, we had no telephone in the newspaper office. Very few people in town had 'em. "Ma Bell" had just moved in and taken over from the old Mineral County Power System line which was one of these crank and ring deals, and if you got them you were lucky, if you didn't it was all right. And Ma Bell had picked up, frankly all antiquated system or fixtures, units that they couldn't unload on some antique shops and brought them in, put in what they called a telephone system. [Chuckling] And the only way we could do was go over to the little telephone office which was a living room of May Marshall's home, on Sixth and F Street, the main street. You go in and tell the operator what number you wanted to call and then stay and visit with her, and if she finally got through to the Reno operator, with that one little, one station switchboard she had, finally smile and say, "Okay, I think I've got 'em." And when they did why, you'd go out on the porch of her house, and they had one of these regular pay-type phone booths, and that's where we'd make our long distance call from, which incidentally that—virtually went way up until the breakthrough just before World War II.)

We called Balzar, and he had [William] Bill Royle come to Hawthorne to investigate the entire set-up. Bill Royle still alive in Reno, was the labor commissioner at the time. We had public meetings in the gymnasium, the school gymnasium. One of the things I missed in either 1930, 1931 that I used the word gymnasium, that's when Hawthorne got its first and only school gymnasium, still stands here today. The total contract was around sixteen thousand dollars to build the gymnasium, and we had a larger playing floor than Reno High School at that time, and we were quite proud of that fact. I have to get

something in there about the gym. I almost overlooked that—that was a big event, and I believe it was finished in '30 or '31. I'm a little mixed up on that now.

But, to shorten up that story, Royle did put enough pressure on the contractor to force him to abandon his system of daily contracting with men and payin' 'em not even enough to eat on for the day. That was one of the sad situations, but it was quickly cleared.

On a few other things of that year, 1931, while the depot was being finished off, sound movies were brought to Hawthorne. We had a little theater that had been built by S. B. Bowers. He and his wife had operated the theaters in Carson City and over in Sparks, and they moved to Hawthorne in anticipation of the boom—it was just a little bubble really. And they built a frame theater building just down the street from where we're sitting. But they installed sound movies in 1931, and that was quite an event for Hawthorne. Same time, the new highway around Walker Lake was completed. And all in all, we were moving on an era of activity, not yet realizing the Depression that had hit back East. And with the construction of the depot, of course, we missed all that.

One other thing that I have noted several places in that year of '31, I recall. I had to do a lot of inquiring. A man named David Graham died in that year, and in the course of writing it up, I noticed he'd been in Hawthorne for fifty years. I thought good heavens—1871—he must have been one of the first to arrive. Fifty years is a half century, and back in those days I couldn't understand how he could really live that long [laughing], let alone stay in one town that long [more laughter]! And in my inquiry, I recall finding out that Dave Graham built the first house in Hawthorne, Nevada. He was a Canadian, not too much known about his early life as

often was the case in those days, later served as a deputy U.S. marshal in Nevada. I'm sure he must have had citizenship papers by then, although there were occasions when some slipped by on that, too [laughing]. He's one that's seldom mentioned in the history of the early days of Hawthorne, the old family names and that moved on—it was Esmeralda County then—and those that moved on to Goldfield. I thought that someday, someone would do a little story on Dave Graham. I have not taken the time to do it, to be honest about it. And of course came 1932, still plugging away at the *News*, and now we were the only newspaper in Mineral County, the *Western Nevada Miner* having folded in 1930. I should have mentioned that, late '29 and '30. And 1932 I might say, was the year that the roof fell in, at least as far as Connors and myself were concerned, running a Republican newspaper in the year that Franklin D. Roosevelt swept the country [chuckling]! We lost our old pal Tasker Oddie, although we carried Mineral County for him over McCarran. We were proud of that fact. And somewhat related to that disastrous election, we also found ourselves out of a job on December 31st of 1932.

Nineteen thirty-three with Roosevelt in office, we saw a number of "make work" projects started, as they were around the country. We had the FERA, Federal Emergency Relief Administration; we had CWA rakin' the leaves, diggin' the hole, and fillin' 'em. Then came WPA, which is a very sound program. Unfortunately, WPA suffers from mistaken identity. The jokes and the gags and all about WPA were really CWA, before they developed programs. WPA did a lot of good in this area around here as elsewhere, even Reno, as you well know; and PWA, the big brother, the loan and grant, for major construction succeeded in getting a bridge or two across the

Truckee River in Reno, just as WPA built the Washoe County golf course. So, I've always thought kindly even though I never voted for Roosevelt—knew he had a lot of screwball programs. WPA wasn't all that bad, and it put people to work, instead of on welfare and relief as we have today. Our only sidewalks in Hawthorne today, I think we can credit to WPA, other than the main street—and that was WPA, too, until the highway widened the street and then they were required to set in new sidewalks. So I have quite an affection for WPA, as an old semi-hard-nosed Republican and a non-Roosevelt man, even recognizing good where it is good. And, of course, the Civilian Conservation Corps, CCC's first camp was brought in. We eventually had two of them and for a number of years. They did a tremendous amount of good.

The only unusual situation we saw was when F.D.R. made his big charge in order to balance the budget after accusing Herbert Hoover of bein' a spendthrift and wasteful, and he did in many speeches and they're a matter of record, was going to balance the budget, and he came with that extraordinary" budget, as he called it. The regular budget he could balance because he wasn't chargin' anything to the regular budget; he was cuttin' back on it. Alongside of it, he set up the "extra-ordinary" which is supposed to be a temporary thing, so he had two budgets going at the same time. The sky was the limit on the "extra-ordinary" budget as far as debt was concerned.

A good example was at the Naval Depot. They then had sixty civilian employees at the depot, and they got caught in a twenty percent across the board reduction in force. They didn't use that expression in those days; that's what they call a "RIF" now, but twenty percent layoff, cut back, whatever they wanted to call it. Well, that meant twelve employees had to

leave the depot payroll, which they did, all men; very few women worked in those days out on the job in ordnance and construction or the like; there were two secretaries there. The two secretaries stayed; it wasn't based upon quota [chuckling]. The twelve who were laid off the depot came uptown—I say came up, most of them lived in town—they immediately signed up and they went to work for WPA. And much of the work that they had been doing, largely maintenance and keepin' the place alive—see, there was no production or anything, but doin' the things—painting, keepin' the weeds down, movin' a few cars for storage, checkin' temperatures and the like—well, the work they had been doin' was then taken over by CCC boys. The CCC boys of course, the former depot boys that weren't in WPA were charged to the "extra-ordinary" budget. The regular budget was bein' held in balance [laughing]! It was quite a go-around, and we laughed about it then; we still laugh about it now. Here again, those '33 to '76, we haven't learned too much; we haven't changed too much. Today they lay them off at the Naval depot, cut back after any war period, then some come uptown and go to work for CETA—Comprehensive Employment Training Act; so where they might have been skilled ordnance men before, now we're gonna make firemen out of them and the like. There's several that have been trained over at the fire department.

(And just yesterday I had a young gal and a young fellow in here—I actually don't know what college they're associated with; I didn't bother to ask—but they're under contract to the Defense Department—their school is—and they're sent into the field. They are conducting a survey and a study to determine how, where employment can be found for these people who are being laid off at the depot, and it's charged to the

Department of Defense. One more example of the defense budget gettin' hit with non-military, bonafide defense expenditures. I dug out the community action plan that we developed for Hawthorne in 1958, the first economic development program of '61, the final larger revision of '64; and I told them they were welcome to use all that back material. It didn't produce any employment. We had several manufacturing firms on the hook, but most of them needed capital when they got here, and concessions. We did get the sleepwear outfit for a brief period while they were milkin' the federal government, moved from Colorado to Hawthorne, Hawthorne to Fallon, Fallon to Utah. I said, "Take all this information and use it, cause," I said, "when you finish your study, you're gonna be sayin' about the same things we said. [You're] gonna have a big book showin' the average mean temperature of the wonderful climate we have in the area, the land available, and reasonable tax structure, all that you can think of to put in that book. And," I says, "one thing, though, don't rush your study 'cause," I says, "once your ye completed it," I says, "you're gonna be on the unemployed list like a lot more of them." I says, "You'll run out of work." They took it rather good-naturedly, particularly the young girl. The fella didn't think I was so smart about it, but it's so true. We're back again now through the study. I wanted to get that lick in if I could.)

Well, we struggled in that year of '33 to '34 without bein' qualified to take legal advertising in the *Independent*. And that grand old German, Oscar Gerbig, he had the meat shop here and then a little groceries, and he let me go for almost a year without payin' him a dime. And I always respected the old man to the hilt 'cause I know for some reason or other he had some confidence that some day I'd pay him, which I did. It took a

long time, but I finally paid him off. That was a rough, struggling year; and, of course, I'm speakin' of March '33 to March '34.

And the big events of '34, of course, we know by this time, the Depression had hit all over the country including Nevada. We had seen that Roosevelt landslide in 1932, even the upset of our friend Oddie by McCarran [in] '32, the others not so unexpected. And in the '34 election, about the only exciting thing other than it was a Democratic sweep across the state—a foregone conclusion—one amusing thing about it, I believe, was the election of virtually an unknown—I say unknown in the northern part of the state—lieutenant governor on the Democratic ticket, Fred Alward. He'd been Speaker of the House, been elected to the Assembly from Clark County when they had only two—not more than four, in '34—seats in the house. I know they had far fewer than Washoe, but Alward had been elected Speaker of the Assembly, and on the base of that ran for lieutenant governor and was elected, went in on Richard Kirman's coattails. He had no car; he had no wife, which sometimes was cause for comment. He would hitchhike rides all over the state, and the highway patrolman—I don't recall whether it was Billy Maher, Tommy [Thomas R.] Bellis; I think Ted Berrum had been replaced by this time, stayed on for a while; they'd change off'n the job in those days when a different party went in power. The highway patrolmen would see him on the outskirts of a town, and they'd make a look like they were just checking and wait possibly a half an hour or an hour before coming north hopin' that someone else had picked him up. They told me this themselves, Bill Maher and Tom Bellis; they were dodging the lieutenant governor all the time. They said he was the biggest nuisance in the world. Once they picked him up on the highway to give him a ride so he could get to Carson or

Reno, but then he'd insist upon them taking him on side trips, you know, to go shopping or talk to some attorney down here and virtually made a taxi out of them. So that was one of the big jobs of the highway patrol, dodging the lieutenant governor, so they wouldn't have to give him all these free rides [laughing]!

And, of course, in that same election Hawthorne had two precincts, one in town, one at the Naval Depot which'd cause no end of grief over who could vote and who couldn't in military service and out. And Gray Masliburn had given two opinions, one sayin' yes, and one sayin' no. We had quite a hassle over that, and a number of Marine votes were challenged and the like on local races. But Hawthorne Number One and Hawthorne Number Two were two of the very few precincts in the state of Nevada that Key Pittman lost that year. That was the year, and it was the day after election in 1934, and he was furious and he had—as he often was when he was drinking and he drank pretty regularly and he was drinkin' that night—he had Mimosa [Mrs. Key Pittman] with him and it was down at the old Nevada Club, and he asked Scoop Connors and myself to go have a drink with him, which we did. And he was furious about this vote in Hawthorne, particularly the one at the Naval Depot, when all the Democrats were sweeping the state, and he was sweeping it, too. And one of his remarks was, "It I find out that that damn captain out there had anything to do with tellin' those soldiers (I believe he called them, not Marines) how to vote," he says, "I'll move this God damn depot to Siam." And those were his exact words [chuckling]. I don't think he was all that prophetic, whatever you might call it. Years later, during what we knew as the Vietnam War, the depot proper didn't move to Siam, but practically everything that had been stored and worked and tilled at

this depot went to Siam! [chuckling] It was rather—somewhat—amusing to me later that he had selected that particular country that he decided where Hawthorne should be transferred to.

So '35 was the again—that was the eventful part—we merged the *Mineral County Independent* with the Hawthorne News. We moved from an old shack on Main Street down to the old shack that housed the *Hawthorne News*, started virtually all over again, selling off some of the old equipment. And I recall we sold some to George B. Russell, former state treasurer, uncle of Charlie, and Herb Sproule. They decided to start the *Carson City Chronicle* that year; they brought some of our equipment. And, now having the only newspaper in Hawthorne and no vast amount of business—although we were doing very well down in Mina, not in Hawthorne. Mina at their peak—there was considerable mining going on, a lot of highway construction. Mina actually was as large as Hawthorne in '35, and had more advertisin', printin' out of Mina.

I got off the track now. But through '35, with the sole paper status, I say, that we did start to show a little profit. I say profit; that meant we could start to draw wages. We used to draw just what we needed from time to time to pay bills and all, and it was, in fact, well into '36 before either my partner or myself could draw a flat sum out of the business. Just backtrackin' a little—I remember 1933 the first year we started (I have the old figures), I drew six hundred and eight dollars out of the business the entire ten months we were actually in business; and along about '36, why we felt that we were on solvent ground and footing, so we agreed to draw one hundred and sixty dollars a month out of the business, and then at the end of the year, if we could give ourselves a little bonus, why, we would. And that was our starting, and we continued

that hundred-sixty right up to 1939. Things weren't all that good or booming.

'36, of course, the old snake charmer was up for reelection, Roosevelt. We put all of our marbles in the "sunflower basket" with Alt [Alfred M.] Landon, took the biggest ribbing around town you ever saw, and lost with old FDR; but not with the sad results, local or national level, that we had experienced in 1932. And business was picking up a little, I think—I haven't gone back to check the books.

So we took a little dip again, I recall, in '37 but a few more businesses established in town. Improved roads seemed to bring more traffic, not any great tourist influx, but more people would travel through, and Hawthorne became a little more of a stopping point. '38 was pretty much the same, but bein' an election year, that would always help us in those days because you must recall, there were newspapers, radio—no television. None of these high-cost campaigns. And even the state candidates would want the local shop to print a few cards for them, and they were good about newspaper advertisin'. So it was a good bumper crop. And the country's beginning to pull out a little, and in those days, automobile advertising was a big factor. There're virtually none any more; that has gone to television. So '38 was a pretty fair year.

We had a hard decision to make, because now McCarran is up for reelection, and we supported Oddie in '32, and owed it to Oddie, appreciated all he had done for Hawthorne. Now we got caught in-between, much as we loved Oddie. He's tryin' to make a comeback. McCarran, because of his frequent clashes with Franklin Roosevelt, a number of items, but mainly the packing of the Supreme Court, as they called it, 'cause we had taken a strong stand against that and McCarran had taken a strong stand, we felt obligated to put our

money where our mouth is, as the old saying goes. And we had to make that decision. We supported McCarran in that particular race, even though we were Republican. And that became, not the beginning, but—so many of—a friendship that developed beyond there. We'd become quite friendly between '32 and '38. McCarran did understand, rough as he could be particularly on some of his own Democrats as they got put of line [chuckling] but when he wanted to know why Oddie—he just asked once and he already knew—he asked us right after the '32 election why Mineral County was still so staunchly Oddie, and we'd point out the flat to the Naval Depot. We said, "We're just as human as anybody else; they all want to know what he has done for us lately, and," we said, "Oddie did a lot for this area." And McCarran understood it. As a matter of fact, McCarran jumped right in and not only replaced Oddie as a U.S. Senator, but replaced him as our number one pipeline to fight for Hawthorne NAD, which he did until the day he died, as he did in 1954 right here in Hawthorne.

HOUSE BUILDING

And of course, we were just gettin' established—1940—newly married couple, wanting to build a home, and late in the year we thought we were about ready. I was still on that hundred-sixty a month withdrawal, but takin' a few hundred out at the end of the year, and I thought I could swing it to build a house. My wife drew the plans, and we went into Reno and showed 'em to a couple of contractors to get an idea what it would cost. Well, first they were not interested in coming to Hawthorne to build a house. We'd known Paul Manuel through my brother. And oh, this was the first house my wife designed; he says, "It's a wonderful design." And he says,

"I'll tell ya. I'll go over the whole thing and estimate—I'd like to duplicate 'em." I don't know how they did it in those days; they didn't have a xerox and all. But he kinda liked the layout she had; and I think he later built one in Reno. But he says, "You can't build this house for less than twelve thousand dollars." We're talkin' five thousand bracket; oh my God, that went down the tube!

Edd Lee was building some inexpensive homes out toward the Veteran's Hospital east of our Reno area there, and I think they used to sell for \$4900. I believe it included the lot; maybe the lot was extra. And we talked to Edd Lee, and he took and he made copies of 'em. [Edd Lee said,] "Excuse me, I gotta have myself a much smaller house, " [of] what Pauline designed then, bringing it into the—we thought the five thousand range. Well, Edd Lee wasn't interested in coming to Hawthorne. Within a year, we noticed two or three houses in Reno that Edd Lee had built from that design [laughing]! We often laughed about that.

So we finally worked out that a top-notch builder—he built homes in Reno, had been superintendent—was living, had bought the Mike Knopf ranch, Golden Willow, next to the Dutch Creek. And he'd gotten away from the carpentry work, and we sat down and asked him if he would take the contract. He said no way he would take a contract, didn't want to be involved with Social Security, unemployment and all; but he said that if I'd hire him by the day he'd agree. He'd get a house built for us and hold it down. So now we were set, but we needed a little money. In one day in Reno I was turned down by oh—W. W. Hopper of First National, William Tobin—I think it was William Tobin, whatever his name was—over at Security, and George Probasco, and [Harold J.] Munley, as a last resort we were overpleadin' with PHA. And George Probasco

and I have often chuckled about it since then that he couldn't remember whether he made the slip or Munley did, but the reason they couldn't even consider us (we're out of debt on the print shop now—put up security on my half), there was no future in Hawthorne. In later years since George has been state president and national director of the Navy League, he's been one of the staunchest boosters for Hawthorne, Nevada [laughing]! I thought I could talk to George because he'd looked kindly on Mineral County; in 1930 he'd won a contract to build a school in Mina. The school building still stands in use. His contract was for six thousand dollars to build a two-room schoolhouse.

So now we were stuck. We'd saved about twenty-five hundred, and we needed another twenty-five hundred to get going. No way in the world we could get a loan anywhere, until a friend mentioned this. He said, "Well, Jack, my dad likes to put loans out," he says, "on real estate." He says, "He still owns some apartment houses," he says, "in El Paso. He owns several houses in Goldfield." And this is old Ralph Meyers I was speakin' to. He's now living in Reno and retired. His dad, old Bill Meyers, said he'd be glad to talk to us; so we drove to Mina. And he was an engineer on the old T and G railroad, and when the train pulled in, we stood over there on the side of the depot. Because the wind was blowin', we had to get on the east side. An old pair of khaki trousers, he'd apparently taken off his striped engineer's overalls, gone over to the house that the railroad had and changed, but I noticed his khaki trousers very neat—.

The thing I remember about the khaki trousers, they looked so neat, nice clean shirt. He wore suspenders on one side, left or right. Apparently his suspender had broken, and he was holding it—the suspender was held to the trousers with a safety pin, and just the general

appearance, you'd figure now [chuckling], this is a crime to ask this old fellow if he'd lend you some money! We talked it over and very briefly agreed 'n he said, "Yes." "Now," he said, "are you sure twenty-five hundred will be enough?" Well, that scared me tryin' to borrow that much. That was plenty we thought. We made the agreement and we drove down the next week to Goldfield, Nevada, met with Mr. Meyers.

In the meantime, Pete Breen, who was the district attorney in Goldfield, had prepared all the papers. In those days instead of usin' first deed of trust and the like, why it was note and mortgage—the old note and mortgage system and a lot of complicated papers. As I recall, Breen charged us ten dollars for the legal services on that paperwork, and we got the twenty-five hundred and were supposed to pay it back in five years. Now we're in business; we got Harold Wright lined up on the building of the house.

We really looked far ahead and invested in land, I might put it. We had purchased a lot way over on the side of Hawthorne, almost like in the boonies. There were only two houses in the whole block, and it was the last street in town in the wilderness, as it were; and we bought the fifty by ninety lot for twenty-five dollars, and that was our land investment. [Chuckling] And that was another thing we ran into with the FHA and all, you know, your lot is supposed to be valued ten percent of your loan. [Laughing] We didn't have that.

Wright started the work, was the head honcho. One amusing side of it was that we have a half basement in there. There was a contractor out at the depot, and he was havin' a little up and down and owed the print shop seven dollars and fifty cents for some printing, and I got him to agree to do the excavating for the basement and I'd pay him the difference. He thought that was a

good deal, so he charged twelve dollars and fifty cents for excavating for the basement had one man on a cat, all day long. And we gave him the receipt for the seven dollars and fifty cents and five dollars cash, that paid for the extra. Now we're in business; we got the house moving.

It was built—958 square feet. This was one of the first new houses that had been built in Hawthorne in I don't know how long. We ran into a little static from some of the people; said, "My God, the newspaper must be makin' nothing but money, look at the house they're building over there!"

It was a white stucco house at the time [chuckling]. Frankly, we still have the same house, but it's over two thousand square feet now. We built—I don't want to dwell too long on the house part, but some of the experience we have, like the loan and all that we got into; and to get off that house kick, this was the tag end of '40, and a little less than three years later when I found I had to go in the army, I'd accumulated enough to pay off the loan in full. And I almost made an enemy out of Mr. Meyers. He said, "Well you agreed," he said, "to take that loan for five years.

I says, "I realize I did Mr. Meyers [chuckling], but I don't want a loan hangin'. I don't know where I'm goin', whether I'll be back home as a reject in a week, or might go over and become a hero or something. Or I might go over and get shot." I says, "I just don't want that hangin' over my head." And those were the days before you had loan insurance, and naturally with an individual. He finally reluctantly agreed to let us pay the loan off in full, but said that he didn't quite appreciate it because he liked to keep his money placed and working, and once he'd set up something, he liked to go accordin' to schedule. And that's the time I got chewed out for payin' back some money too soon! [Laughter] And he

was a wonderful little fellow, but that was the way we financed things in those days. Some ways right today, I think it's better. It wasn't all on a handshake; we had to protect him; he was a man gettin' up in years and had a widow and the one son, but no strain and no appraisal and this and that. We got by without any opening and closing costs and all the like, and we were very fortunate. Well, that was our big event of 1940, was our home, and now we thought, well, we may be pretty well settled, although I was certain that war was just around the corner because the same pattern seemed to be building up that we saw in 1939 in Denver on our way home from that famous trip. The bulletin board in the Denver Athletic Club that day in August of '39—Here it Comes! And it did, that war in Europe. And we were all edgy—we saw the depot start expanding almost overnight. The boys in Washington knew what was coming.

THE 1940S

Forty was a very pleasurable year. And we moved into the home, incidentally, in March of 1941, really enjoying it. But all the time the town was bursting at the seams, and we could see more and more people getting into war work. Gabbs was brought onto the scene—used to be called Brucite. Now we had more, not advertising unfortunately, than we could handle, a lot of that. My partner and I, we'd try to hire a printer—they were difficult to get in those days—we were offered oh, any amount of job printing that we had to turn away because we just couldn't get it out in time. You can work only so many hours a day and in the evening. But oh, we saw a lot of work just go right past our front door because we were advertisin' and tryin' to get printers in. And especially in '42 after Pearl Harbor hit, and we were all—well, I should

put it this way: the draft came in '40 there you recall. We were all signin' up for the draft, and a number of printers coming into town. It was rather strange, but they were all workin' at the ammunition depot. By 1942, there were at least a dozen printers workin' out at the ammunition depot. Once in a while one'd come up and moonlight on a Saturday and help us out, but no way could we hire a printer. They wanted to get into defense work, war work. They were looking ahead, and we were caught with that.

And of course, after Pearl Harbor, which was December '41, I know, '42 then we were at war as far as Hawthorne was concerned, not just the nation. Blackout was in effect. Security guards were on almost every side road here and there. I'm not sure they could have caught the right fella or done anything to protect the depot, but they were there [chuckling]. And you could just feel—we were strictly a military community then on the footing. In the meantime, I knew it wouldn't be long until Uncle [Sam] would be grabbin me, I figured, still tryin' to find help. We knew we could afford help then, and no success. And so late in '42, and even over my partner's objection, I paid my own way to San Francisco and down at one hundred Harrison Street, seem' about getting in the Marine Corps. I was past thirty, and they did have, you know, some special unit for not the young fellas. I didn't intend to become a gung-ho Marine, but get in uniform, serve where I could, do what I could; and I got turned down flat on that. My feelings were really hurt because I thought I had influence. I had helped Joe Jackson, Buck Callahan, Julian Epperson, all of them, line up physical examinations at the Naval depot here with the certainty they'd pass because they were anxious to get in, all as commissioned officers. [Laughing] They laughed about that; I could get everybody in but myself, in the right way.

And so not dwelling on that—I always refer to it as my two years of compulsory military training. They say, “Are you a veteran?”

I say, “No, but I have had two years of compulsory military training, 1943 to ’45.”

When the Army got around to—and the local draft board was fair; they said, “We’re gonna get you in about three or four months.” I tried to make all arrangements possible. My partner was gettin’ jittery about it, and he wasn’t too well, and had an awful time finding anyone to come in and work for us for the duration. We got an old fella out of retirement, Howard [N.] Riddle, who worked in Tonopah in the early days, worked in Reno for different print shops, had done a little writing. We thought Howard could do it; Howard came down and he worked the one week while I went to Fort Douglas [Utah], first time around induction center. They sent us home then for two weeks; come back, you’re in. I got home, Howard says, “I can’t hack it,” and took off his apron and left.

Now I’m [laughing] gonna be going back in two weeks, sick partner and nobody in the front office. Well, one of those many printers who’d come to work here in Hawthorne in defense work—I looked up [Alvin D.] Al Mann, who’d been working in Goldfield when Goldfield still had the weekly. And I had quite a talk with him [he said], that if I could insure him a deferment, the same as he was getting at the depot, why, he wanted to get back in the printing business. I had to go to my draft board in Hawthorne. One member didn’t like it too well; I said, “Well, you got me,” I says, “you’re askin’ for everything?” They finally agreed to give the man who took my place, a permanent deferment [laughing]!

And now the Navy wasn’t gonna release him. There was a pig-headed overnight officer out there, lieutenant in charge of the

manpower division or something, and he’d run a bowling alley or something back in Cleveland [Ohio]; and suddenly he was a Naval officer and tellin’ me about how they were gonna fight the war and win, and I wasn’t gonna tell him, the draft board wasn’t gonna tell him, and he really chewed me out. I came back uptown, by this time we had a telephone; I got on the telephone to McCarran’s office, and I don’t know whether Eva answered or who answered—I got to talk to the old man himself. I told him the situation. “Well,” he says, “first off you’re a damn fool. Why didn’t you ask for a commission the same as all your friends are doin’?”

And I says, “How in the hell’d I get one?” I says, “I was lucky to finish high school, I never had a gun in my hand; I don’t know anything about the military.” I said, “Do you realize how many thousands got in the same boat?”

He says, “It sounds like you’re talkin’ to one of those S.O.B.s out there right now that won’t release this man. Give me his name. Just give me his name. I don’t want Social Security number or anything else.” And I gave it—the full name, where he’s—the department he’s working in.

Well, the next day Mann came up and he said, “I don’t know what the hell you did, but they called me in the office and told me I could get my release from war work and could go to work for you.” And that was some of the struggle I had to go through, two weeks period before I went back in.

And, of course, during those two years of ’43 to ’45, I missed all the excitement in Hawthorne. That’s when all hell broke loose here—13,000 people in the area. I was home only twice during those two years, and even though I was just over the hill in California—couldn’t get in or couldn’t get out. It was one of those situations. But didn’t regret that side of it because, while I contributed nothing to the

war effort—I'll be honest about that, I wound up bein' a male WAC. I found a way to cut my hours from sixteen to eight, I forged a buck slip to get my way out of company level, and had a friend in personnel that moved it where it couldn't be held back, and then they were sending a number of WACs overseas, so I got one of their jobs up on the hill in higher headquarters [chuckling]. That's why no one'll ever tell me that a secretary is overpaid or that a secretary shouldn't have a break—not twenty minutes in the morning, twenty minutes in the afternoon—five minutes on the hour or ten. I sat at a typewriter from 7:30 in the morning till 11:30 continuously, not continually, but continuously and constantly typing. And you almost fall flat on your face and your back is in such a crook. So I'll tell you, that male or female secretary has my sympathy if they're sittin' at a typewriter all day long. Somethin' that the average person doesn't realize, it can be just as hard as out shovelin' a ditch or something else.

Well, let me just say that '43 to '45 and I got out of the army, my partner was really in bad shape physically. He had to go to California for five months. We were almost broke. In fact in the entire year of 1944, while Hawthorne was booming and bursting at the seams and people makin' money that never intended to make money—some of your good Reno citizens that took it back and bought property in Reno—I could name a dozen or more—and I was confronted with that situation. In fact in the year 1944, for the entire year, I drew nineteen-hundred dollars out of the business, during the boom period, and workin' for Uncle Sam for sixty-six dollars a month. I didn't do too well during the war period [chuckling]. So it was a case of startin' all over. We had a bad press. Our equipment was shot.

And McCarran made the offer if I wanted to go back to Washington, go to law school, why he'd fix me up with a job; by this time, why, he's a wheel. He had his seniority, and one of the ambitions I always had was to go to law school. But in the meantime a little item that I hadn't gone to college at all; you don't jump—you might say even then in the early days 'cause I'm—not with a high school diploma to get into an accredited law school. You might go to some side street law school, but Nevada's very rigid on that. You must be a graduate of an accredited law school.

So I was facin'—if not that I had been married but a matter of two years, I would have taken the offer; but now in order to take a crash course, even three years, you know, and get the bachelor's degree and then move on in from there with political influence, still is a spread of about five years, well, I was thirty-four going on thirty-five now; I could see I was gonna be forty years old, which to me was an old age then. Today it wouldn't be too old to start a new career, but I had to make the decision. I made the decision; now I'm gonna stick and build the damn paper back up.

And that was when we had to go back in then and borrow a little money, which most of 'em had it socked away in tin cans and all during that war period. But this time why the bank was willin' to be reasonable with us. My partner and I agreed, so we bought the *Bridgeport Chronicle-Union*, not the title to the paper, but all the entire plant which had been forced to close during the war because the owner had been drafted in the army; having no partner and unable to get help, had no choice but to close his newspaper during the war. And their equipment was much better than ours because DeChambeau had replaced his equipment not too many years before. And so we did get hold of some good equipment.

And so in 1946, like 1933, was starting out again, you know; it was virtually starting a new paper.

POLITICS

Now so much for the paper side and all. Before I get too far ahead of myself, I wanted to mention on that 1940 election. And, of course, the big thing statewide was whether Key Pittman had been put in a deep freeze or ice box, and that story told for so many years. Some people still believe it, which I certainly don't. Pittman, in fact, I made the crack at the time; I said, "Well, hell, you can't put Key [chuckling] in a deep freeze or one of those boxes," I said, "you gotta put him in a barrel—a pickle barrel." I said, "He's been pickled, but [chuckling] you're working from the inside out in that case." And made a nasty crack!

But the thing I do want to mention about the 1940 election, that Bob Douglass, who was the—used to call it the "collector" of internal revenue and not "director," and I had quite a talk one time. And he explained to me why Jim Parley and Roosevelt developed that bitter split. He said that as far back as '36 or '37 (Parley had told him this story himself an' Douglass was loyal to Parley, not to Roosevelt, 'cause he pretty much agreed with Big Jim), but Roosevelt and Parley had agreed to break tradition in 1940 by havin' FDR go for the third term and Parley as his running mate for vice president—[John N.] Garner would be through. Both from New York, of course under the federal law you can change that; that's the place of residence at the time you take office, not the—regardless, both from New York, they weren't gonna let the Catholic issue get in the way of Parley or anything else. It was pretty well agreed. And as Douglass told it to me, that old FDR led him to believe

that for about three years, then in the closing months called him in and said, well he's sorry, but he had to have a man from the grain belt, as he called it, the wheat belt or grain belt—Midwest. And he said that Parley considered that the insult of his entire political career. In case someone'll say, "Oh, Bob Douglass is just pullin' Jack's leg," or that, "I doubt that anything like that was ever said," thirty years after it happened (1970) my one and only trip to Ireland, I had the pleasure of talking with Jim Farley for thirty minutes in the Gresham Hotel in Dublin. We talked about Nevada politics. We talked about Nevada politics, largely. A man with a remarkable memory, recalled the fight between McCarran and Pittman over William S. Boyle. He had a little difficulty remembering Al Cahlan's name; he said, "He had an odd name—it sounds—it was an Irish type name, but it was—" He said, "He was at the Democratic National Committee meeting; he had a newspaper in Las Vegas, I remember."

I said, "Yeah, that was Al Cahlan."

"Ya, that was the guy." And he called out, oh, any number of names like I say, Boyle and Bob Douglass and he was reelin' 'em off.

So I finally got around, and I asked Farley. I told him, I said, "A very good friend of yours told me a story and I believe him just like that." I said, "I'm not gonna tell ya who it is 'cause it bears out what I said in 1936; I made a prediction in '36 that Roosevelt would seek a third term."

And old Parley kind of glimpsed—he had to look down (he's a huge man), smiled, and I related the story about Roosevelt promising to have him as a running mate. And I said, "I've always been curious, Mr. Parley;" I said, "is that a true story or not?"

He smiled, and he said, "Well, you told it to me." And he wouldn't say yes, and he wouldn't say no; and if you were to call him on

the phone today, he'd probably say the same. And later on they called him a sorehead and all. He was classed as a sorehead for not gettin' behind FDR. I think Farley had every right to be, 'cause I've always been convinced that he got the run-around.

One angle that Bob Douglass told me about. Their first test (those old boys were thinkers and planners)—the famous switch of Thanksgiving Day was the first test to see how deeply steeped the American people were in tradition. You might recall it came out twenty-four to twenty-four, half the states accepted, half didn't. Roosevelt makin' the statement that he was doin' it to help business, to increase the buying period between Thanksgiving and Christmas, Roosevelt was never interested in businessmen [chuckling]. We all know that, but that was a real test; and it was a pretty clever way of doing it. They found it was about a fifty-fifty split, at least by the governors who declare it, and among the people it was about a fifty-fifty division. There had to be some greater reason than they gave us, and that turned out to be one of the reasons of changing Thanksgiving, was to see if that third term was really as locked in as they thought it would be. So that was my big memory of the 1940 deal, and of course, Pittman's death.

I was going to say that when Berkeley Bunker was appointed it was a surprise to us all. While Berk had been a very aggressive, upcoming (as they call it, instead of coming up—it's upcoming now like ongoing, but—), potentially strong Democratic politician, Speaker of the Assembly and all, possibly lieutenant governor, I think it came as a surprise to the Democrats as well as the Republicans when Ted Carville put him in as Senator. However, it was all right with me, I thought; I like it, and on that political angle we just jumped from '40 to '42. I figured since

Bunker is in there, give him a chance, see if he can prove himself. I supported Berkeley Bunker against Jim Scrugham and I still believe Jim Scrugham made a mistake. He was a power in the lower house; he had ten years seniority, and he was the only engineer. And you can take sixty-six lawyers, attorneys, they have back there today, and they get into a real problem. They can take ten percent, six-point-six, whatever they want to do and allow them to speak for sixty-six attorneys, and most of them still listen to one engineer if it's a technical problem. Scrugham had it, Scrugham had the power there, and we were so disappointed that he gave up that clout. Little Carl Albert has proved it today strictly by seniority. Sam Rayburn did it. So I stayed with Bunker. Of course, Scrugham upset him, as we know, and went on to win, not to live too long after.

And Berkeley bounced back. I wondered if he was doin' the right thing then, just as I'd—the very thing I'd criticized Scrugham for—knockin' out an incumbent Democrat in '42, Berkeley turned around and did the same thing in '44 knocking out Maurice Sullivan who had finally found his home back in Congress after those years of trying. And so Berk more or less set a pattern of things to come, and then, of course, in '46 when he bit the hand that fed him, you might say.

Poor Carville had taken all that criticism for appointin' Bunker in '40 and tried to help him in '42; Bunker, with McCarran's insistence, took on Carville. And I recall telling Berk and Ray Germain, living in my own house (they couldn't get a room in the town in '46, it was still crowded and all; I let 'em stay in my own home, arguin' half the night with 'em) that Bunker was makin' a mistake. I said, "Stay in the House." I said, "Scrugham should stay in the lower house." Now I'm tellin' you. I didn't like the idea of

Scrugham knockin' out an incumbent, even though I was of the opposite party. I didn't like the idea of you knockin' Maurice, and now you're gonna do the same thing to Carville." I said, "You know what you're gonna do—you're gonna win in the primary and you're gonna lose in November."

Bunker's words: "Oh no." He said, "If I get past this primary, I'm in."

Ray Germain gave a little more thought. He said, "Jack might be right. It's too late to back up now, if you let down after the primary even Malone can beat you!" I remember the words like that.

"Nope." Bunker was convinced all you had to do was beat Carville.

Well, you know the rest of the story; he didn't. And it's one of the sad turn-arounds because it turned poor old Ted Carville out of office, broke as he was most of his life, back to a limited law practice. All those young fellas that he had given a start to, so to speak, on a different team. And Bunker, just as much as Carville, found himself relegated to oblivion, made the one try even to come back in '62, not ready to do it. Those things stand out in my mind of that period right in through there.

Oh, I could go on to each little race, you know, of like [Malcolm] McEachin, virtually unbeatable for secretary of state, in his first try for Congress was upset by Charlie Russell. Malone, also was elected because of the Bunker split. And I wish some of them'd go back and tape or photostat, whatever they want to do, with the films of the Reno papers, *Gazette or Journal*, maybe both, for the statement that Harry Truman made in 1948 when he put his arms around Walter Baring on that shaky platform in front of the state building and, in effect said I either "need" or, "I want this boy back in Washington with me," or to "help me." Somewhere there's a statement Harry Truman made, and that's

what turned the tide for Walter Baring to defeat Charlie Russell in his bid for reelection. And somewhere in there, I think both Baring and Truman were pledged to repeal the Taft-Hartley law.

And one thing I didn't mention (back to the 1942 election) was a totally new twist that came into the picture when Congressman Scrugham decided to oppose Bunker for the Democratic nomination for U.S. Senator, and that was the issue of the big BMI plant (Basic Magnesium, Incorporated) at Henderson, as well, as the BMI plant at Gabbs. Bunker, as I recall, was very critical, particularly of the Gabbs operation, of the whole BMI failure (as he put it) to produce magnesium on time and at reasonable cost to aid in the war effort. He was later accused—I won't say directly by Scrugham—but the inference was that Bunker was bein' encouraged in this action by the Aluminum Company of America, ALCOA, which I also believe vehemently denied takin' any part in the Nevada election contest. But the issue was that magnesium might at some future date be a threat to the aluminum industry.

Aside from the competitive possibility between the two metals, there was a lot of difficulty in getting that Gabbs plant built. First I should point out that Gabbs was originally known as Brucite, and prior to that in the early thirties or the late twenties, I believe it was discovered by Harry Springer and Al DeAtley of Mina. They weren't really certain what this nonmetallic brucite was, but it was similar, in many ways, to rock used in brick refractory work as lining for furnaces and all, particularly in the steel industry, magnesium bein' used and some other. But they did locate virtually a whole mountain north of Luning, about thirty miles north of Luning, a little to the east, on the eastern edge of Gabbs Valley. I do not recall whether they gave it a name.

Shortly after I moved to Hawthorne, I recall there was a settlement of a law suit filed by, well Standard, it could be Standard Slag which later was in there, but the very word Standard was a large corporation in Ohio, and they had filed suit against Springer and DeAtley for title to the claims. And, again relying quickly on memory, the action was dismissed. I think it was tried in district court in Nye County before Judge Frank T. Dunn. I'm sure that he was the judge at the time. This location being in Nye County would be in that judicial district, of course. We must remember that Nye County was a district in itself then. Mineral and Esmeralda were a separate judicial district. And soon thereafter Springer and DeAtley sold the claims, and I don't recall the first name I heard names kicked around, such as Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company out of Cleveland, Ohio area. Standard Slag later did come into the picture, and then a smaller company named Basic Dolomite. I believe their home office was Maple Grove, Ohio, but Cleveland, I know today is the headquarters, and might have been then.

But Basic Dolomite was the first to start producing this strange rock, as I'll call it, large-scale; and they were mining brucite, brucite only. I recall going out in the middle thirties to take a picture or two and do a little story on the operation, and they had just a string of cabins up a canyon. It'd be very similar to some of those I've seen in historical books about Seven Troughs [Nevada], Rochester [Nevada], Mazuma [Nevada], and wherever you find just a little string of cabins, and one boardinghouse on the one side of the canyon looking down. And they had a small pit at the far end of the canyon which they were taking out this ore, trucking it to Luning and shipping it to Ohio. How much scientific development had gone into it between the

middle thirties and just prior to the outbreak of World War II, I do not know; but the Basic Dolomite which later became Basic Ore, as I recall, seemed to mushroom overnight.

And now we learned that a companion—I hesitate to use the word “metal” because it is always referred to as a nonmetallic; the brucite was and I guess magnesite falls in the same classification—the ores, side by side in that mountain were brucite and magnesite, having many uses in, as I mentioned, the refractory work. But magnesite which could produce magnesium had many and varied purposes, could be used somethin' like our titanium today, aluminum in areas as metal, converted to a metal, not already metal in its rock stage—primitive stage—could be used in that way or trimmed down so finely that'd become a cause of a fire. It can resist fire and it can cause fire because there when you get magnesium bombs—and that's what they were after—were the magnesium bombs; some of it used, I believe in tracer bullets. Well, when reduced to that finest flux form and with what we might term, alloys or chemical additives, they can then produce fire instead of resist it. But it was largely used for the manufacture of bombs in the early part of the war, and the need for it in great quantities is what caused the upsurge at Brucite, now bein' called Gabbs. At one time they considered callin' the little town “Toiyabe,” instead of Brucite, but it seems that the name Gabbs was settled upon.

The how, why, and wherefore to produce magnesium in vast quantity on such short notice apparently stumped our government to the extent that they invited the British “cousins” to come across the pond to assist; and so the early part of those war years starting just prior to Pearl Harbor and struggling through 1942 after Pearl Harbor, we then heard of BMI—Basic Magnesium, Incorporated.

And that name was a consolidation of the old Basic Ores and Magnesium Electron, Limited, which was the British counterpart. And to share and share alike, under cost-plus, as it were, to produce the magnesite, refine it to a certain point, crush, mill, refine, then truck it from Gabbs, Nevada to Henderson, Nevada, where the final processing plant was installed.

The political argument to that arrangement, and which seemed to flounder at times, is what brought this cleavage between Scrugham and Bunker over the issue of BMI. Bunker charged that the combination was not working, was too costly, and wanted the government to step in, find a better way of operating that plant at Gabbs. Scrugham, while not totally defensive of BMI, in turn criticized Bunker's attack upon him as not bein' fully founded on fact or technical knowledge. The battle raged throughout the election campaign while they tried to get the plant going.

I recall just prior to the September 1942, that they invited oh, a number of newspaper people from around the state—Reno, Fallon—I know Claude Smith was there that day; I went out. Scrugham, I don't recall whether he showed up that day or stayed away. Bunker certainly didn't show up. And the big pitch was to show that now they were ready to produce magnesite in great quantities from the plant at Gabbs. And that was the day I was convinced that maybe Bunker knew what he was talkin' about, when he questioned whether the plant would ever work. Oh, they took us on a Cooke's tour, and everything seemed to be running tine, but there was one major bypass on the final crushing, conveying the rock into the mill, that the rock was not reaching the mill, and I had doubts and expressed it to friends. I was more convinced than ever that the company was in trouble when at the luncheon somewhat afternoon, a little Englishman in shorts—khaki shorts

as it were and one of those Dr. Livingston type hats—was supposed to be the principal speaker, Major Ball, with two or three initials, some titles, more initials behind his name, when he so confidently, boldly, almost arrogantly stood up and explained why it was necessary to draw together this British firm of Magnesium Electron and the American firm of Basic to proceed on that joint war effort, because he said, "With the British know-how and the Yankee dollar, we shall make it work."

Well, that was enough for me because I don't think that little fellow knew his way around Gabbs, let alone be a project manager on something like this. Well, not to dwell on this Basic Magnesium deal and all, just pushing it over, the scandal continued long—I don't know if I used the word scandal—the argument—the issue stayed alive—after the defeat of Bunker by Scrugham because then the government did step in, and under some kind of an arrangement, they called Anaconda Copper Company in to finally get that mill operating, producing, and at much less cost than the initial production that had come through the British-American combo. But I believe by war's end, the price per pound was still higher for their magnesite than aluminum was bein' produced for. That was what earlier had caused a lot of this argument between Scrugham and Bunker.

I should mention that some time after the war, that the English went home; the American side, what had been Basic Refractories, or some other name at one time—no, I believe that's when they formed Basic Refractories—the American side of the Gabbs operation which had been caught in the middle of this play from Washington, took back the full operation, peacetime basis, as a going private enterprise and had been very successful in the operation under the name of Basic Refractories of Gabbs with their parent

corporation in Cleveland, Ohio—Basic, Incorporated. And I repeat, I think it only fair to note that although that word Basic—the B keeps cropping up—that it was a whole new ballgame after the war; and to this day, Basic is very successful in a mining operation producing both magnesite and brucite. That was the big issue of '42.

By '46, Bunker's big problem then; I think I've mentioned Bunker went on to win Congress in '42 and then stepped up and challenged the man who had appointed him to the Senate, Governor Ted Carville, who had succeeded Scrugham in the Senate following Scrugham's death, then filling out an interim appointment as it were, and that was the big cleavage there. In fact, it was the day or the year that Molly Malone came of age, you might say. Poor Molly had run, I don't know how many times. I know he ran against Pittman in '34. The two Hawthorne precincts were two of the very few that Molly carried that year. I can't think offhand whether he got into the '38 race against McCarran when [Albert] Hilliard opposed McCarran in the primary and on up, but I know Malone tried it again, oh, two or three times. And few believed lightning would strike in '46, but because of the split in the Democratic party, it did.

In speaking of those divisive races, I've probably overlooked one back in 1938, mentioning Al Hilliard just reminded me of it. That was when McCarran was completing his first term, and Roosevelt was determined to purge him from the Senate because of the stand he had taken on the Supreme Court packing, plus one or two other issues in which they had tangled. And two things that always amused me about that race, there were many, but two in particular. When famous presidential special went rolling through Reno, and FDR walked to the back of the

platform, tall Al Hilliard standing there, and Roosevelt as best he could put his arm on or around Hilliard and urged the voters to elect his friend Al. And as it came out later that Roosevelt had completely forgotten the man's last name [chuckling], but he wanted us to elect his friend Al. That was the same time McCarran jumped the train somewhere—I don't know whether it was between Dunphy and Lovelock, or somewhere west of Elko—anyhow, farther west. McCarran got on the train in the early hours of the morning, and he showed up on the platform, too, much to the surprise of Hilliard, Roosevelt, all the anti-McCarranites. He got quite a hand that morning in Reno.

Another unusual twist to that 1938 election (I should have mentioned that when I was rolling through those years of '38) was the issue of so many Catholics seeking office in that year and somewhat of a carryover from the 1928 Al Smith race. It had died out in '30, not present in '32, nothing of it in '34 or even '36, but ten years later in 1938, why, here it came again. And I purposely dug out this large flyer [refers to papers] equivalent of a full page ad in a newspaper. I've saved one; you can see it's getting old, torn, dog-eared, and just to note that it was not only taking after McCarran, but also Carville who was seeking the office of governor, Frank McNamee for lieutenant governor, Leonard Sledge for public instruction (superintendent), [Margaret I.] Brodigan, I don't know whether it was George or Margaret who was runnin' in '38 for clerk of the Supreme Court, and Matt Murphy for mine inspector. They had some good Irish names there—McCarran, Carville, McNamee, Brodigan and Murphy, Sledge wasn't; but there's an interesting side to that. This flyer, these bold headings, "Face the Facts" is the start, and after all the stuff in between, says, "Let's keep the Cross off the

Capitol.” Defeat the Catholic Ticket.” I was always amused because it was true in the case of McCarran, Carville and McNamee. The only thing left out of that was McNamee, the Republican, was running against another Catholic, Maurice Sullivan; and Brodigan, Murphy were Democrats. They threw the one Republican, I believe, in to make it appear that it was not slanted against one party. As a matter of fact, Leonard Sledge was not a Catholic; I don’t know if he belonged to any church, but I certainly know he was not a Catholic. But they added him in for good measure because of his friendship with another deputy superintendent of public instruction, Ray Killian, because Killian was a Catholic and Sledge had a friend who was Catholic. They had to get that one in there too [chuckling].

It wasn’t even a well planned last minute attack. Not only poorly put together, the timing was bad, but so jumbled that the people whose names appear on the flyer couldn’t have done any more to help themselves, had they put it out themselves [chuckling]. Incidentally, it says in the small type of disclaimer, “The information contained herein is published by Protestant labor, business, and professional men of Nevada.” (No identification.) “Arthur J. Banta, Reno, Nevada.” Efforts to trace down Banta, just for curiosity’s sake, as I recall, produced nothing more than some painter living in Reno whose name was Banta at the time, and he disclaimed anything or any knowledge of the flyer. It was one of those mysterious overnight developments.

But there are some amusing things in the thing, not reading the whole flyer, full page, such as it starts, “The word has gone out from on high that McCarran, Carville, McNamee, Sledge must be elected.” Says, “They need McCarran in Washington to get the jobs and distribute the federal pelf, Carville in

Carson to hand out state jobs, McNamee to carry on in safety when Carville is away,” in parentheses, “They can’t trust some of it,” and “Sledge to control the schools.” And it goes on down. It gave Bob Allen hell, who was the state highway engineer. And about the only thing that could make an Irishman, even with a sense of humor, a little proud, was they did refer to the ticket as, “the perfect flower of the Catholic constituency is the Irish nobility and gentry.” And up until then some of us, what we call pig sort of thing, Irish, didn’t know that there was such a thing as any nobility or gentry [chuckling]. It made us feel pretty good. It says, “In fixing up the slate, they, of course, ignored the lower strata.” Well, most of us thought that’s what we were all the time. And, “After the Irish boys are safely in office and with their feet on the desk, there will be a few jobs to pass out to the proletariats such as cleaning spittoons. The posts of dignity are one and all allotted to the Irish.” And then they list the ticket again. It alludes to the divorce law. The divorce law would go out, the easy divorce law’d go out if they were elected. They pointed out that Judge Carville had served as chairman of Bishop Gorman’s “confraternity of the laity, whatever that might be...”—I’m quoting from the ad there, “whatever that might be...which organization is said to have collected in excess of \$90,000 of the faithful of Nevada, may we pause and inquire for what purpose.”

Well, I remember that drive, speaking for myself now. I think they pledged \$90,000; I think they collected somewhere around forty or forty-five, and I have personal knowledge it was to help pay off some debts. And we’re liable to have to do it again [chuckling], considerin’ the shape that the Catholic diocese is in in 1976, and it’d take more than one leader, a governor, a senator, or anybody else, to head up the committee and do active work.

Oh, it goes on, I'm not going to, as I say, bother you—. That is one that I've saved through the years, and I've used. I've showed it to people in both parties of all religious persuasion or none at all, particularly younger ones who would never believe that something like this happened in the state of Nevada. It has on occasion, and that was really the big kicker of the 1938 election.

[You were telling how these were distributed.]

Oh yes. For example in Hawthorne, someone brought a group into Hawthorne and then they appeared with someone to go around, have kids deliver 'em house to house, but some were dropped from airplanes. I don't recall whether there were some circulars dropped in that same '38 election for the Republican nominee for governor, John Fulton, I believe it was. But it had nothing to do in the way of an attack or any mudslinging and all; it was strictly an affirmative deal, and that might have given this group the idea. Fritz Volmer out of Silver Peak flew all around the state distributing large handbills supporting the Republican ticket, but strictly on an affirmative basis, nothing to do with this stuff. So, these, in some communities, I'm not certain whether they hit Hawthorne by air, but I know when I mentioned it one time that Walter Cox over in Yerington, he says, "Oh God yes, I remember that!" He said, "They flew over the town and dropped 'em all over town and the wind was kinda blowin' them away, and two or three picked 'em up. Some laughed, some got a little mad."

And little Father O'Grady who was then the priest in Yerington, spotted one, and he rounded up about six kids as fast as he could. And he had them go all around town where they could see 'em, pick 'em up, put 'em in a box and bring 'em back to the church. He saved 'em. I don't know whether there was a

Sunday between then and the—I think there was—the Sunday coming up before election. And then that Sunday just a couple of days later, he had 'em passed out at the church, so he served as a distributor for those who were attacking the [chuckling] Catholic ticket. Father O'Grady insisted they get into every home they could, particularly Catholic homes. He wanted 'em all in there!

And, of course, we know that. McCarran, Carville, Brodigan, Murphy won their races. McNamee lost to Sullivan because it was a Democratic year, and Sledge, not a heavy campaigner, lost to Mildred Bray, who was much better known than both the deputy superintendents. But Mildred Bray, not only with the family name, her father having held the position before, but her wonderful little mother, one of the finest campaigners I've ever seen, short, gray, walked with a little limp. I know here in Hawthorne while Mildred talked to the group of the level of the university women or the pink tea society, all the women's groups, Mildred was talkin' to all and makin' a pitch, her little mother made the main street of Hawthorne, up one side and down the other. And she stopped in the bars as well as the grocery stores soliciting votes. And I'll tell you, no one could turn that little lady down when she requested the vote! And I've mentioned that to Mildred in later years. And I always hoped that she gave her mother a lot of credit for bein' a terrific campaigner, and I believe she did.

Now let's see, we've hit the highlight of '38; of '42 that basically, that was the big one then. Everybody was patriotic by this time. And, speakin' of that patriotic bit, I recall that bitter fight in '44 between Pittman and McCarran for the Democratic nomination of U.S. Senator, say I recall, because I wasn't here. (That's one I missed; I was down there in Camp Roberts savin' the nation and winnin'

the war.) But that got a little bit sticky too. I told Vail about it afterwards. I had supported Vail for lieutenant governor in '42, thought he was wrong going against McCarran, supported him the first time he ran for governor in '46, but no more after that for little things, that he would do things in strange ways. Pittman made an attack upon McCarran, nothin' to do with religion or anything, now the patriotic side, and it was apparently a hot issue. As I say I was over in California, and whether it was taking effect, it was a close race, and reportedly it was gonna be a close race. But whether Pittman did it directly or some of his over zealous supporters. I recall one; I don't have a copy of that in front of me, unless it's in the files of the newspaper and might have it in our own paper—they ran some very small ads—but one caught my eye when I read it. It virtually accused McCarran of causing the loss of lives of 2900 American boys on Guam or the general area of the Turk islands, the atoll, as they call it, because he had failed or refused to vote to fortify Guam. The fact of the matter was then, the various proposals to fortify Guam, never got out of the House of Representatives, therefore the Senator couldn't vote yes or no on such, and this is I think, what helped to spite Pittman during the campaign. Secondly, talking with military men of that time since then, the most foolish thing in the world, they said, would've been to spend a bundle fortifying Guam when it was surrounded by Japanese who controlled all the rest of the islands in the Truk atoll. The proof of it was at Corregidor, which was supposed to be impenetrable or somethin' like that, it was the epitome of resistance, fortification, but we all know how long Corregidor lasted, the Philippines.

But that was the one emotional kick that I recall from the '44 campaign. Oh, of course, bein' down there in California, I'd read Pittman's side or McCarran's side and how

they bused all the voters from Los Angeles in to vote for McCarran, and maybe they did; I don't know. But either way it went, why, as we know McCarran squeaked through that one and then went on to hold office, but not without opposition. Even in 1950, he faced even primary opposition, a young fellow named George E. Franklin, who's now a very widely known controversial lawyer public official, in and out, now a staunch Republican in Clark County. So we know that each time McCarran had to face his strongest opponent from within his own party.

THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

To my knowledge the little fire department in Hawthorne, and I'm sure it was the very first one, was an organization that developed in 1929 when the construction of the depot was started and all; and they realized there might be a need for expansion from one hose cart to two. And actually that's all they had, were the old pull carts as you often see in the movies or in a museum somewhere.

Following completion, construction of the depot and downward trend in the economy and even population, the volunteer fire department just dwindled away so to speak. If there was a fire in town, someone would run to one of the two hose cart stations on the main street, ring the bell, and everyone'd just turn out, some get in the way, some knew what to do. Usually the end result was that, as the saying goes, they'd "save the lot." Lost a lot of building, but never lost a lot.

Then in the middle thirties, the 20-30 Club, which was active here at the time decided that we did need a volunteer fire department; and the 20-30 Club, in addition to its actual function as a service club, also became the volunteer fire department. All members of the 20-30 Club were members

of the volunteer fire department. And, of course, this was still in the era when we had no motorized equipment and continued on the same way of pullin' a little old cart out and tryin' to unravel the hose if it didn't get a kink in it and hook it up to a hydrant if we could find one. And I do recall one fire; it was in the red light district, as we called it then, at the south end of town, early one morning, 2:30 or 3:30. And the 20-30 had had a good poker game and party the night before; they were a little slow in getting out to answer the call in the early hours [chuckling], pullin' the cart through weeds and across lots, and without exaggeration never did find the fire hydrant until after the building had burned down. [Laughing] There was one hydrant up in that general area, and the weeds had grown up around it. [Laughing] An' we were still lookin' for the fire hydrant, I think when we could see the lot beneath the embers and coals of the building [more chuckling].

And that and one or two other similar incidents made the people realize the 20-30 Club wasn't doin' that well as a fire department and probably needed a few more hydrants and possibly even a fire truck. So in 1938 there was a general reorganization of the volunteer fire department with bylaws, rules, regulations, organization set up, borrowed largely from other volunteer fire departments around the rest of the state, electing of officers, as well as assignment of firemen. And they pursued the idea and eventually obtained a used truck, virtually the chassis, and then the truck was built almost from the frame up, the first fire truck that the town had. Still keep it around here as a souvenir. And that was the first motorized equipment, was in 1939. And, of course, since then the same fire department has gone on into, you might say, its second generation, the sons of some of the fellows now serving in the volunteer fire department and continue on, on that basis as a very active

organization. But I must point out that then, with the start of construction again at the ammunition depot in '39 and an obvious increase in population, the town of Hawthorne from its town fund, decided to employ two firemen. And for years, in fact all through the war years, the town had two, sometimes three, but no more than three paid firemen. The volunteers continued through all those years and remained that way until about a year or two ago when the CETA [Comprehensive Employment Training Act] program came in, and that increased the paid fire department to six or seven, most of them under the CETA program. And to even many of the volunteers, it's rather amusing that under the employment side of the coin, put someone to work and train 'em. Well, we've all chuckled about that one because now we have more paid firemen than we can find room for in the firehouse. [Chuckling] It's true, bunk beds and the rest of it. So that is our rather brief, but that is the history of the little fire department in Hawthorne, and, of course, their good working arrangement with the Navy from 1930 on.

While we had no motorized equipment, as I mentioned before, we always had the back-up call for a serious fire, a telephone call to the Naval Depot would get the Navy's truck rolling, two miles from town, of course; but they were always coming in to back up the local volunteers. And we had that very good arrangement all through and beyond World War II. In more recent years since our own department has grown through these additional paid employees and with additional trucks, new equipment, why the Navy is on a standby back up.

INCORPORATION OF HAWTHORNE

Earlier I'm sure I mentioned that one of the reasons for the incorporation of Hawthorne

after all the years as an unincorporated town, was the situation in the immediate postwar period or that one year 1946, when we found ourselves with the tail waggin' the dog, that is to say Babbitt had about double the population of Hawthorne, Babbitt bein' Navy housing, on federal reservation, no taxes, all the rest of it, not too concerned in the basic future of Mineral County. They could vote out anyone that they chose, and we thought it was time to insure local government, as best we could. And we chose the incorporation route. It was in 1946, after a petition signed by the required number of people, presented to the court, that Judge William D. Hatton finally in June of 1946, declared Hawthorne, Nevada, a third-class city [chuckling]. And sometimes we wondered whether we rated third-class designation afterward. And then, of course, he set the first election of three councilmen and mayor, was held in August of that year. And they served only until the following spring, the regular time for holding municipal elections around the state.

Those first few months it was new and novel to us to have duplicate or parallel government, both the county and the city; but we had a rather substantial council and a very fine mayor, Henry Gilbert, who was a well established businessman in Hawthorne at that time, had been in business at Silver Peak, who was raised, in fact he was born in Belmont, raised in Manhattan-Tonopah-Silver Peak area. And they got the ball rolling, so to speak. The city was going along without any great visible change in government, other than the faces. We'd go to the council now instead of the county commissioners who had always served as our town governing board. We didn't do anything astonishing, well as I think back now, it just went along; let's put it that way, until that spring election 1947. And the spring election turned out to be a

nightmare. That was the beginning of the end of the city, although it took several years to realize it.

Of course, Mr. Gilbert was reelected mayor, a tremendous majority compared with those few councilmen. It wasn't a large vote, but he was an easy victor. But one man, who had been servin' some time in jail usually on a "drunk and disorderly" charge, and put out on, not the streets, but the alleys to do clean-up work with a truck, *very* capable when it came to cleaning out the alleys [chuckling], he would actually go into the yards, clean up some of the rubbish, and made a real hit with the ladies, he took the yard cleaner and kept those alleys spic and span and hauled out stuff that they couldn't get their husbands to haul away and all, well he filed for council. By this time he served his thirty days, whatever it was, and he won rather handily. Another one who won by two votes, I remember, was the janitor at the school; and he'd made quite a few friends around, and he said he wanted to do somethin' better than the school janitor; and he thought if he could get elected councilman, someday he might get a job with the city. That's the way it started.

It was only a short time when the issue came up over the appointment of city clerk and treasurer. And "Sis" Bergevin who is now over in Carson City workin' for the state, was the clerk and treasurer. And the first move, of course, that Mr. Gilbert made was to retain some of those substantial employees, and he had one councilman supporting him. But the other two that I have just mentioned in the election, said, "No." They were gonna veto, override, not override, but not sustain (I'm gettin' it reversed because the mayor does the vetoing), but they wouldn't confirm any of these appointments. They said we've always promised these jobs to friends of ours. They weren't [chuckling] gonna let the

mayor have anything to say about it. And it reached a stalemate. And of course the dangerous thing there was the handling of rather substantial sums of money, small as the city was; and the mayor found himself [chuckling] where he couldn't name the treasurer who was responsible for that money, he and the treasurer signing checks. So he had to just up and resign so to speak, and his one councilman followed him out. It was a rather turbulent session that night at the little frame building that we called "city hall." Well shortly after that a petition was circulated and this was in 1947, a petition was circulated to disincorporate. But that was in September that year, and as I recall, the petition was not in order or did not have sufficient signatures. And so it died before it got off the launching pad.

In 1948 (that was as I say in September), and just a few months later in April 1948, and between that period of the first petition to disincorporate, the grand jury had been impaneled to look into the city affairs. And they brought in the report in April 1948, and they strongly urged the mayor at the time, who had succeeded Mr. Gilbert, and all councilmen to resign. The mayor did resign, but the councilmen said, "No." They were gonna stay. [Chuckling] And so they went along and with all this turbulence and mix-up on budgets, and we were just beside ourselves on how to try to hold the city together, wondering if they were capable of self-government. And April of 1949, with the next city election coming up, rather than have an election of the mayor and councilmen, a lot of people said, "Well, let's have an election to disincorporate the city." And this time the petition was approved, and the election was held in August, 1949. And the city was retained by the close vote of 345 to 311, so we tried it again. And it was just an up and down

situation. Seemed that almost every council meeting, one of the councilmen or women would resign for personal reasons or any reason they want. The number of people who served on the council would be interesting to know, and I don't, and I wouldn't take the time to search my own records. I'd ask somewhere if they don't have them around the courthouse and see if anyone can run a tally on how many [chuckling] councilmen and women we had during that brief period.

We battled it up and down, changing mayors, changing, I say, the council; and now the crunch came on the budget. There was just no room in the budget to support Mineral County and the school district and the so-called city. The little forty or sixty cents, it varied from that figure, that they allowed of the tax rate wasn't enough to accomplish anything for a city, and it was really putting the county in a bind by losing that slice of the five-dollar "max," as we called it.

The next time we tried for disincorporation was, say we, I had opposed the disincorporation in spite of all the trouble, I wanted to give it a fair chance the time before, by this time like so many others I was ready to throw up my hands, say we just can't hack it 'cause in 1955 we must remember that was the year that the, I think that was the sales tax, I'm not certain, but I do know it was the consolidation of school districts within the county. We went to the county-wide system. There was a whole new ballgame in the financing of education of our schools, how to gain some relief from this five-dollar maximum tax rate, not relief from that thank God, we still have that in the Constitution, but I mean to make all the demands and desires fit into that amount of tax money available. We'd made a complete change in our school system. The counties were readjusting, and our city was getting nowhere. By this time the population shift

started to take effect. We were not threatened any more by a transient population. The old gag I use of the tail wagging the dog was now no longer with us, so that a petition was presented to the court in August of 1955 to hold an election to disincorporate. Once again, insufficient signatures, not proper.

A second petition was filed in October of 1955, and this time was approved and the election ordered. And the election was held on January eighteenth, 1956, and the vote was 518 to 408 to disincorporate the third class city of Hawthorne. [Chuckling] It was down to about fifth class by this time. And it was on March thirty-first of 1956, eleven-twenty a.m., something like, the Armistice Day eleven o'clock deal, that the third-class city of Hawthorne ceased to be a city and reverted to its status as an unincorporated town. And that one there would take two volumes and twenty-five tapes to try to record everything of some of those turbulent battles we had.

It was not the partisan infighting of the old county days. It was, as I look back on it now, that there was a new toy brought into the yard and unusual, we never had anything like this before. It brought out, I think, caused to surface a lot of suppressed desires of people who had never thought of running for county commissioner or public office. And though they understood nothing about local government, it seemed to be just a chance for people to go out and say, "Well, I can do just as good a job on the council as he or she can," and the next time there was a vacancy, "I'd like to be appointed." And it just seemed to be that way. People were just anxious to get on there and have it on record they'd once been a city councilman, and they'd go for a month or so. They didn't understand the work of the government. It was, I say, the feuding and fighting with the, not just the council themselves, some of the employees,

and everyone had a favorite. And there was an almost accepted belief that once you were appointed to the city council why you could fire anybody and put your friend in their place. I can't detail it all without goin' back in the files of those papers because I'm just goin' through my mind now the police department, as you will see in there, and the utilities. And it was just one of those occasions, as I say where everybody wanted to get a chance to ride that new bicycle or unusual toy they had in the yard, and they all got fighting over it. It was just about what it amounted to.

It was just this, that Hawthorne was neither big enough to be a city nor was it ready to be a city. And to this day I say that the only way we could justify it bein' a city, if ever we reduced the number of counties in Nevada, and I'm sure Mineral would be one of the first to go, and our county seat were located some distance away, the Hawthorne would have some justification, the same as Gabbs. Now Gabbs has justification in being a little, small city. They are so far removed from Tonopah, their county seat, just as Hawthorne is for the most part Mineral county, as we know; and Minden and Gardnerville are two more examples that city and town are both four-letter words.

And we went through this big hassle at the '75 session of the legislature. I know in one of the heated arguments I had with [Warren L.] Snowy Monroe up there—I say it became heated because he wouldn't listen to anything—I was raisin' hell because the '73 session had appointed an interim committee to study the government of unincorporated towns in Nevada. The interim committee was made up of senators and assemblymen all of whom reside in cities. They crisscrossed the state supposedly holding some meetings. They held one in Tonopah a hundred miles from here and cut that one short, never did

hold one in Hawthorne, the largest town of the group involved in this study. And they got crossed up and held one in Gabbs which is an incorporated city. [Chuckling] And it was a mish-mash, as I told Jean Ford, told Monroe; I said, "What kind of study is this?" Yet they reported back to the '75 session of the legislature that they had done a great amount of research and study, and that the status of an unincorporated town, as a municipality, was virtually obsolete and should go. In other words, under the two bills they had in the legislature, Hawthorne, Minden, Gardnerville, Tonopah would have been just wiped out insofar as any local governments within those entities to continue. They were just done. We became part of a county.

In this argument I mentioned I had with Monroe, he said, "Well, if you don't like it, why don't you incorporate?"

And my response to Snowy was, "Well, you damn fool, we tried that once and found what a failure it was." I said, "What is there about the four-letter word 'city' that's so sacred and the four-letter word 'town' that's so obsolete." And these people had lived in cities all their lives and didn't understand how we operate in an unincorporated town. We're virtually the same as a third-class city, but we avoid the duplication of the chief of police and separate jail which we tried to have down here one time during the city period. And it was later sold to a fellow who stored his Granny Goose foodstuffs in it [chuckling]. That's about all it was good for. And we just had one hell of a beef, but we won our fight in the '75 session; and we're ready to go back in '77 if they try to pull it on us again.

I used those various names. Now we know that there was some fire and a little brimstone and all raised by Silver City which is in Lyon County, and by Genoa which is in Douglas. They wanted their little town hall meetings

and all. And we certainly supported them and sympathized with them, but theirs to a large extent was a matter of pride.

We, who had lived for years and years with this town government form; and let me just point out here; when gambling was reinstated, the state licensing law, now that's license, was set right in the statute that the revenue derived from slot machines, tables, and all, would be divided twenty-five percent to the state, twenty-five percent to the county, and fifty percent to the incorporated city or unincorporated town where collected. For the rural outside, total outside areas, then seventy-five percent went to the county and twenty-five percent to the state. These bills that they had in the '75 session would have taken away all of our revenue and most of it's collected right here in Hawthorne and yet would have gone to the county level.

Then there're certain state revenues, non-property tax revenues that the unincorporated towns share in the same as the cities do. Now, not just the revenue, *with* that revenue we pave streets in our unincorporated towns, we bond ourselves, we do the same things that the small cities do and under the same general laws; whereas if it were all to revert to the county, someone between Mt. Montgomery and Basalt or between Rawhide and Dead Horse Wells, could insist they would rather have that road paved than the street in front of the schools in Hawthorne and we just had one hell of a time convincing those otherwise intelligent legislators of why we were so violently opposed to what they were doing to us. Unfortunately, there are three huge unincorporated towns in the state of Nevada along the Las Vegas Strip, Sunrise Manor, Winchester, Paradise, who had steadfastly resisted bein' drawn into the city of Las Vegas. And because of their unincorporated

status, they derive certain revenues and they run it the way they want, let's put it that way [chuckling], out on the Strip. And that was really one of the motives behind these two bills to knock out unincorporated towns. Their attention was all centered on those three spots right there at the outskirts of Las Vegas. But to get at them and to force them to either turn that revenue over to the county or to be annexed to the city of Las Vegas, they were shooting us all down.

Now I got off the subject of our own problems and all, of the time, but I wanted to stress that in just as we had a hard time seeing or feeling the change from town to city, when we went back from city to town, we didn't feel any change or see anything that was greatly different.

[Well one of the important governmental studies, as far as political scientists are concerned, is this study of town board government.]

Yes. Well because I read your governmental research bureau [Bureau of Governmental Research] and bulletins and all, and unfortunately, most of those studies have been done by true or imagined intellects usually spending, devoting most of the time of this work on college campus. And again like this legislative committee, how many of 'em have actually lived in a bonafide unincorporated town. I'm not condemning anyone individually, but I've seen some of their reports that I would have sent back for recycling before I ever distributed around the state, all because of lack of experience and because of lack of experience of living in an area, also diminished the understanding they should have to turn out one of those reports. Jim [James W.] Hulse and I wrangled about it a couple of times because I said, "Jim you've forgotten the days when you lived in Pioche." See, Pioche is an unincorporated town.

Caliente is an incorporated city, but Pioche is the county seat.

So Jim from his reporting days on the *Journal* and all, used to ask a lot of questions about it, has a pretty good insight to it, but I said, "You go along with people, you should do them a favor, you say we're not ready to turn this report out, to complete this study until we go and find out. You can't run around Peavine Mountain or somewhere and say, 'Well, I've been out there in the unincorporated area.' They're in county area." Here again we go, the words, he's an independent, no he's not, he's an *Independent American*, see. The word independent, as the word unincorporated, is used too loosely, and then it has, you might say, a dual meaning. And there's an unincorporated area or we like to refer to it as outside area, the area in the county outside the incorporated cities and the unincorporated towns. Therefore, outside would be a better definition because everything in our county for example is unincorporated, the desert lands where the lizards roam and all, but we are an unincorporated town within the county. And when we can get, particularly our political scientists, well all teachers, not just at the college level or high school teachers who are teachin' government, local government and all, to better explain this to their students, then I think that automatically it follows that we have a better understanding of the two types of government.

Now in Carson City, they call them supervisors, as they do in California. We call them county commissioners. And where Harry Truman comes from they call them county judges, a county judge [chuckling], give the impression it was a judicial office where it's the same as our county commissioners. And people could be misled sometimes just the title, and judge, commissioner, supervisor. We have the same situation in our courts. We

have district court in Nevada. In California it's a superior court, nice title, superior.

And some of 'em, I want to digress a moment on that 'cause we've battled this one time, the case work of judges, the cow county judges, you know, don't handle as many cases as the big boys in the city, and that's quite a wrangle in itself. Every county in the state of California, and there are fifty-eight of them, has at least one superior court, but they have a varied salary scale. I know years ago when it was basically, oh maybe twenty or so years ago when it was basically, the judge's salary was something like seventy-two or eighty-four hundred a year if he remained the entire year in his county. If he would go on the circuit and handle tough cases on the outside, it automatically jumped to fifteen thousand for the year. Walter Evans would leave Bridgeport and go to Los Angeles and handle some of the toughest cases they could throw at him. The one time [chuckling] they had an old judge, I believe it was in Alpine County, he lived very well on his seventy-two or eighty-four hundred a year and he didn't travel at all. But there was that incentive, it was an incentive and an option for them to travel. I wanted to throw that in so that when these people start makin' comparisons here in Nevada of our judges. And somewhere along the way I'm gonna kick that in too, about the judges.

BLACKS IN HAWTHORNE

The much publicized and most of the time poorly publicized and wrongful reporting, could be classed, about the situation at the El Capitan and the colored people or blacks (whichever they're callin' themselves at this time), and I use that comparison for a purpose, was a spotlight on the entire community. We realized that no one would deny that possibly the black people, tourists or

local citizens, were the victims of an injustice when El Cap maintained a continuous policy without budging any way with their own rule of not serving blacks. That policy of course was set by the Smith brothers. Barney was not there at the time, and Woody, a minority stockholder, and a native of Mississippi (the Smiths were from Canada, but Woody's from Mississippi), did make a strong effort as a minority stockholder to reason with the Smiths. And I think many of the black residents of the area right today will bear me out in that statement. Woody enjoyed a very good rapport with most of the blacks in this community, as contrary to the national view we get and misinformation, and I've watched it from the time the first one came to Hawthorne. They place a little more trust in a southern gentleman than they do in any northern do-gooder; and regardless of what all the other do-gooders, well-meaning crusaders, and all else tell ya, that the southerners are not all looked down upon by black people.

Back to the so-called major crisis that the papers would have us believe was going on in Hawthorne, other than the injustice I mentioned, the real agitation came because of the publicity that both the printed media and radio and TV were playin' on, particularly TV. And someone will say, "Well how can you justify that???" Well one example, I recall Hawthorne made the front page and headlines in the *Reno Journal* one day along with the story about the protest bein' filed with civil rights committee, whatever it is, commission [U.S. Advisory Commission on Civil Rights] and all. There was a reprint of a purported menu showing I think coffee a dollar and a half a cup, ham and eggs ten dollars fifty cents, so on. Well it was more than a purported menu. It was one that had been hastily put together in another restaurant in Hawthorne;

it was not the El Cap, although anyone reading that newspaper that wouldn't automatically relate it to the story alongside, would have to have a real complete explanation. That menu came from a smaller restaurant owned and operated by a man born in China. In other words, he was an American citizen, but he was of Chinese extraction, an American citizen, and he was more adamant about serving blacks or equally so as the El Capitan. But because of all this sudden flare-up and flourish, why Hawthorne at one time was called the "Mississippi of the West." At another time I heard the state of Nevada accused of bein' the Mississippi of the West and just inflammatory remarks. Now, while we had that one bad situation almost isolated in Hawthorne, even though we endeavored to get wire services, Reno newspapers and others to give a more composite picture of the community of Hawthorne, acknowledging and admitting that the private enterprise, in fact two restaurants were the cause of the publicity (whether it was overdone or not), but to tell the rest of the story.

I won't say the first black person ever to live in Hawthorne, there may have been some in the early days, but during my period here and from 1929 to 1940, late '39 or '40, there was not one black resident in the town of Hawthorne. When they started building up the depot and at the insistence of the federal government that ten percent of all the people hired on these federal projects, both the Ammunition Depot and some of the construction, that is what started the influx of black residents into the town of Hawthorne which became a very heavy percentage.

Now bear in mind, when the first one showed up particularly the school children, we had only one school, one high school in Hawthorne, one elementary school. The day they arrived they became students in

our school, never any question of school integration, no problem whatsoever there because we couldn't. We had only the one school and no one paid that much attention to it. They became part and parcel of the student body, the athletic teams as we see 'em today, and we had that in Hawthorne thirty-five years ago. The stores, the soft drink parlors, and several of the other restaurants, and the rest of it, the community was quite integrated and almost overnight. A number lived in town, rented or brought houses when they could. There was never any question of housing in the town of Hawthorne. The only segregation of housing was at the place called Babbitt, owned and operated by the United States government. So the Navy itself had set a pattern, a policy of segregation that's lasted for many years there in Babbitt, but none of this ever reached the newspapers or press or did we ever get credit for the instant integration that was accomplished in Hawthorne with no difficulty at all, but the isolated cases.

At the same period in time and one of the same days that Hawthorne made the front page and you can check out the files at the *Journal*, on the first column well inside on the right hand page where sometimes its a little difficult to see unless you fully open the paper, there was an item about a brief sit-in of a drugstore or lunch counter complex on California Avenue [Reno] because that establishment in Reno refused to serve blacks. It didn't make front page because it was in Reno. And that was one of our complaints, about the publicity and realizing how bullheaded that Lindsay Smith was, in particular, that it was going to take time; and I think most of the community was willing to see the Equal Rights Commission or someone else come in and bring this thing to a head and get it over with. That was our attitude. But the publicity only inflamed people both ways and

either caused them to choose up sides, those who were more belligerent, others to take a hands-off policy, say well we're not gonna get mixed into it now after all we've been reading in the papers and hearing on TV. So that was one time that the exposure through the press actually did more harm than good.

I don't recall whether it was ever concluded, but the Equal Rights Commission had two or three actions on file. I believe they were going to court, and finally one way or another, the order came down and the El Cap relaxed on its position on barring or attempting to bar blacks from being served. And one amusing, it was rather amusing, at least it was to these two black fellas, and I knew them well. One day in Carson City during a legislative session and this was when the equal rights situation was real heated, and the Smiths I know had, at least Lindsay said this openly, that he had spent quite a bit of money to see that Bruce Parks was elected senator, and that was over Farrell SeEVERs at the time, to be defeated. And that he was gonna camp there in Carson City to make certain that Parks voted right on the Equal Rights bill. Poor Bruce, dead and gone. Now, whether Lindsay knew it or not, Bruce was committed for the black people here in Hawthorne to vote for him.

And there was a drag and a lull, and Phil Ferris, who was then the chef, restaurant manager at the El Cap (now at the Sharon House in Reno), and I were standing talking and rather amused about the spot that Lindsay was tryin' to hold down, and Lindsay came out and he said, I'm getting very impatient." He says, "Would you like to go across the street and have a drink?

And we said, "Yes." We left the capitol building, went downstairs across to the Senator. As we walked in the Senator Bar through the little restaurant-cashier point there in the bar, there was the bartender and

two customers at the far end of the bar, both black, and as we walked in—apparently had purchased a bottle, but had a drink at the bar. They finished the drink and put it down—picked up—and one of 'em saw Phil, the chef, and he says, "Well, hello Phil," waved to him.

And Phil called him by name, said hello to him and the others—. Well, Lindsay walked right up to the bartender and said, "Do you serve those people in here?"

The fella said, "Yes, just look at the color of the money, that's all we do," or something like that. Smith was somewhat aggravated, and he went out then to ask the poor cashier to get her on the ball about what was the policy—do you serve 'em? In the meantime, Phil and I are havin' our drink and really enjoying the show because when Lindsay came back in he said, "Phil, those people spoke to you. How do you know them?

Phil says, "They work for you in Hawthorne," or one of them. He pointed. He said, "The one there," he said, "he works for you in Hawthorne.

"He does?" he said.

"Yes, he's one of the best maintenance men we have around there." [Laughing] It was one of Lindsay's own employees and recognized Phil, and Lindsay [more laughing] wanted to know the policy—whether the place up in Carson City was servin' 'em [more laughing], and Phil and I have often laughed about that because at that stage of the game Lindsay was just a little bit confused. And that employee was a pretty sharp black fella, and he knew the score too. He knew what was buggin' Lindsay when Lindsay saw him at the bar, but he ducked out because I guess he didn't want to lose his job at the El Capitan! [Laughing] That was one on the amusing side; it wasn't all that serious or that bad.

And one other thing in the publicity, I don't believe it was Eddie Scott, I think

it was [Charles] Kellar that named—was quoted in the newspapers as sayin' that he and the women and the children had been drivin' from Vegas or something and came in late at night, and they'd been more than twelve hours and could not even obtain a glass of milk for the children, or a cup of coffee for themselves. And that was quoted in the paper. Well, that's another thing, say, the community in general resented. Why there were several places that they could go get coffee and milk or get a full meal, granted, not the El Cap, but others. Because when you—when the press will pick up out-and-out lies, no effort to substantiate, you know, a ridiculous statement of that kind, well, it's just not good publicity for the community and certainly shouldn't win an award for some of those "brilliant" writers.

And when the bars were let down and no question about the blacks entering, there weren't all that many that wanted to go up and drink at the El Cap, or even eat there. There were a few that gambled some and still are, not many, but a small percentage as, well as locals of any race, creed or color do; very few locals gamble, usually depending upon the tourists. So that it didn't bother anybody, didn't hurt them a bit to have the black citizens in with the whites, the Orientals, the Indians and all else, it didn't bother them that much. A good sequel, all the time that they were fighting that the blacks were talkin' of boycotting [laughing], the actual amount of trade they got, a boycott wasn't that much different.

And speakin' of boycott, I do believe I have that on—punch—that's about the time that the El Capitan boycotted me and the NAACP [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People] boycotted me [chuckling], 'cause each one was screamin' and hollerin' that I should see only their side

of it, should do this, should do that; and I in effect told 'em, "A plaque on both your houses; if you stop all the fightin' and yakkin' maybe we can get this thing resolved." So the El Cap pulled their advertising out of the paper and stopped sending any job printing over, and the NAACP after puttin' pressure on a very fine friend of mine, still here, she'll tell ya the story, Odesa McNiel.

She came in one day with tears and said that she just—she was sorry, but her boy couldn't sell our papers any more, and I asked her the reason. "Well," she says, "you know it's all over this big fight they're havin' at the El Capitan, and they say that you're not doing the right thing by them, so they don't want anybody reading the Hawthorne paper, and they don't want any black person selling it." Well, I said that I understood. And she says, "You know my boy's savin' a lot of money from sellin' those papers. I sure hate to see this."

I said, "Well, I understand how it is, but," I said, "that at least gets me off the hook." I said, "If they come around, a month from now and want to know why I don't have any black boy sellin' my papers—"

And she said, "Well, I don't blame ya."

And while we do have them now, for a long period I didn't. I was waitin' for the day any of them questioned me. I said, "Well, you haven't let me know the boycott was off yet." So I was caught in the middle of that one, but I've always taken pride in it.

The same lady I speak of, the black lady, she drove up one day, and she said—or she had a campaign sticker (bumper sticker), "Streeter for Senator." I said, "Do you know Mr. Streeter?" No, she didn't. And I asked her why she was pluggin' Streeter instead of Senator Bible. Well, they'd passed the word down from Reno that Senator Bible was not the man because he voted for—; and I forgot how she told me, she had a hard time

explaining it to me, but that he wouldn't give any support or something to cloture (she'd say "clotuah"), but the cloture. And so that made him a bad man; they'd have to go for Streeter whether they knew him or not. The amusing part, the Smith brothers both had "Streeter for Senator" [chuckling] bumper strips on their cars! [Laughing] They were furious at Bible, and they were supportin' Streeter to the hilt. I kidded Jack Streeter about it many times [really laughing].

I said, "You didn't get many votes, Jack, but you had some diverse groups supporting you!" [More laughter] And that always gave us a laugh. And so when I asked this poor, shouldn't say poor, but this very nice Odesa that, I said, "What is this? I've heard that too, but what is this cloture that they're talkin' about?"

And she said, "Well, I don't know what it is or what it does, but," she said, "He's supposed to vote the other way on it." She didn't know what it was or—and so I told her the story.

I said, "Odesa," I says, "your story reminds me of something," I said, "of my good old friend Martin Hill in Tonopah and in 1948 [we] made a trip from Hawthorne to Tonopah with Charlie Russell in a vote-getting effort. And Charlie's workin' in and out of some businesses, and I'd drop into a bar or so, the usual way, [say] hello and all and discuss politics, "By the way, can you help my man?"—and all this. I ran into a good friend, Martin Hill, and asked if he'd like to have a beer and he said he would and he did. And I thought I'd get one down, and go for openers, and asked if he'd like to have another. Ya, he thought maybe he would, and so I got around to the congressional race, that I was here helpin' out an old friend, Charlie Russell, [who] was running for reelection to Congress. And Martin put [down] the beer bottle and, "Oh no, uh, oh Johnny," he says, "I couldn't give ya any help there."

And I says, "Why not, Martin? Why are you so determined, just 'cause he's a Republican?"

"No, no, that's not it at all but," he says, "he voted for that damned Taft-Hartley law.

And I says, "Oh, I heard that, Martin—"

"Oh, it's true," he says, "you look at the record, you'll find he did."

I said, "Ya, I remember it." I said, "What is this Taft-Hartley law, Martin, that they're talkin' about?"

He says, "I don't know what the hell it is, but it's bad I can tell ya that." And that was his whole statement! [Chuckling] I've gone through the Taft-Hartley and the cloture deal; they don't know what it is, but it's bad.

HAWTHORNE GAMING

Well, gambling as such, legalized or otherwise, it was something that I grew up with. And of course that was during the period when it was outlawed from 1910 until '31, that I recall tables—pretty small kid in Goldfield when I would go in the back end of the Hermitage saloon somewhere, would see the table and a slot machine or two. And then of course in Tonopah, 1919 to '29, oh, it was quite common to have slot machines. I still recall when old Brown Barrel ice cream parlor would have two nickel machines, sometimes a nickel and a dime machine, and pull-handle type as we know 'em today, in the pre-electronic days. And the one that always fascinated me (and we'd play those once in a while down at the Merchants Club, play as kids—weren't twenty-one or anything—a dime or two), the old Mills-Dewey machine which was an upright console usually done, you know, with beautiful woodwork on the outside and the big circle, but it had an air compression on it. And you'd give the push, and the air compression would spin the wheel

and line up the red or the green, the black (five, ten, twenty-five cents). So, it was part and parcel, I guess, of our growing up, to play the slot machine when we had a nickel or dime if we wanted to play.

And when I moved from Tonopah to Hawthorne, still during the period that [it was] technically illegal, well, we had the slot machines. It was quite common in those days, at the end of a bar. They didn't have slot machine stands, but right down usually at the end of a bar, close to the door, would be a nickel, dime and a quarter slot machine—seemed to be standard all the way through. So, and they'd have—well, the town wasn't big enough to support the crap game, but they would have their poker games and panguingue, an awful lot of that. So when the repeal of the law which had outlawed gambling (supposed to have done), became effective in '31; it was somethin' like our switch from town to city and city back to town. It wasn't really much of a change. And I also can recall goin' to the basketball tournaments in Reno and saw any number of slot machines in Reno during that period too, and knew that there were card games going on up over the Palace, and there'd be many back of the Smoke House somewhere.

All through that period, '31 we might say right up to the beginning of World War II, this legalized gambling had been there already, just a new season, so to speak, for the new crop coming in. The growth was so gradual that none of us really paid all that much attention to it. It was really in the World War II era and the postwar period, as we all know, and I'm back in the statewide side now, that the clamor for more colorful slot machines—new ones were bein' designed and bein' brought on to the market where there was an old Jennings machine, I recall, the one of the first to show the jackpot in a glass deal. And it was not

always in round numbers; there're so many, percentage would drop into the jackpot, and when it filled, you'd get a good jackpot. If it tripped when it was half-filled, why that's what you got for your pay.

Really, I guess the glamour side of it, to my knowledge, started with the El Rancho in Vegas and the old Last Frontier, an' where not only did they have a large casino, many games, multiple games, but also the beginning of the floor show, they called it, entertainment—live entertainment—but the floor show. And from there I could add nothing that people don't already know or haven't read in a hundred books on the big mushroom since, say, 1950 to 1976.

In our locality, that was about the size of it—for oh, until the construction started at the ammunition depot in '39—started again—. There was a roulette wheel over in Mike Gallo's which was the forerunner of the El Capitan, that he built after a fire, and maybe as many as five slot machines. And we really didn't see a real upsurge in gambling until we were really at the outbreak of World War II. The casinos were (I say the casinos)—the El Cap was the large casino, but then there was Harry's Club and the Hawthorne Club, and they were gradually putting in more games because the construction end of it was really mushrooming. And then of course during the war they started adding on or crowding in, more than adding on. [Chuckling] There's some old time pictures that we see—the El Cap that had the greater number.

During that period which was the beginning of any extension of gambling in Hawthorne, the old Hawthorne Club was owned by Pete Castellani and Dominic Petrini. Dominic'd come in from Virginia City, and his son still owns and operates the Delta at Virginia City. Where Joe's Tavern

is now located, that was called Harry's Club operated by Harry Springer, well-known Nevada mining man most of life and later served in the state assembly from this county, and Joe Hobson, who had come out from Reno, after the war returned to Reno, engaged in gambling there, and I believe is still quite active in it. Then on the opposite side of the street, I repeat, the Gallo's Inn faced main street the early part of the war period, and then was burned to the ground. And that was when Mike Gallo the owner at the time, built rather quickly—I think I touched on that before—about three weeks time he put together the initial—the nucleus of the present-day El Capitan. And after completing it, getting his license after a struggle, he sold the property, that property and the two-story hotel unit that had been moved in from Tonopah following the fire that destroyed the Ramona Hotel, two lots south, to an investment company, The Ram Investment Corporation.

The name Ram was derived from the first names of the three partners, let's see there was Rube, Abe and Maurice. There was Rube Goldwater, Abe Harris, and Maurice Berman, I believe it was. Goldwater was the father of the boys who practice law, one in Reno, one in Las Vegas right today. It was only a few months ago I was discussing with brother Dave, the one in Las Vegas, different financial corporations that have had announcements in the newspapers, advertisements and all—The Ram Investment. And I said [chuckling], "I wonder if those fellows have ever checked on the fictitious name and the title and the right to it," I says, "that your dad had at one time." And he says it'd be an interesting point, and he was going to check into it, to see how someone had just by chance come across the identical name, Ram Investment.

The Ram first leased to a couple of fellas from San Francisco; one was Frankie Farrell,

and the other one I'm not certain of the name without checkin' it. Thought it was Tracy, and they are the ones who changed the name from Gallo's Inn to the El Capitan. They had had a bar in San Francisco, and that was the name of their bar—the El Capitan. They stayed I think only a matter of months, and I naturally am hazy on this because now this was happening at the time that I was in the army.

Farrell and his partner gave up their lease, and it was taken over by Fay Baker, John Petrinovich, I can't think who the third one that came in with them—Fay was to handle the bar, Petrinovich the restaurant, and the third man the gaming. And they operated only a matter of months and makin' big money then during the war. Maybe that was it, they probably had built it up and had a chance to unload, not knowing when the war was gonna be over and get out.

So then it was about 1944, the war's still on, that the Smith brothers, Gordon and Lindsay, and Barney O'Malia all came down from Gabbs and purchased the business, the property as well as the business, bought out Ram Investment and bought out the lessees that were operating. The Smith brothers had a large mercantile store in Gabbs which also had mushroomed because of the war boom, and they also had a bar and gaming area adjacent to the large store. And Barney O'Malia had been the manager there for them, it was my understanding; as I say, I had no chance of knowing who they were or what they were until after they came to Hawthorne, you might say. The Smith brothers continued to handle the business venture at Gabbs or their various holdings while Barney became the active manager of the El Capitan. But they continued on and obviously made good money out of it. When the war was over and the dip between 1946 and prior to the outbreak of the Korean War, there were some pretty slim days that

the number of employees was reduced, the number of games no longer in action, but it still held on as the largest establishment of that kind in Hawthorne. Oh, we have several bars, but the only casino type of gambling left and of course the largest restaurant.

We must remember during those war years that two o'clock curfew was on all the bars and gambling places, so it was some time before the El Cap could become an around-the-clock operation, as it has been I believe ever since the end of the war. And two years ago they had more or less of a celebration, Barney's thirtieth anniversary with the El Cap, having come here in '44 and two years ago bein' '74. And at that time—might punch this in right here—a little of the history because Barney hasn't been there all those thirty years. There have been several changes in the El Cap. And not only in the physical appearance of the place, but in the corporate structure, so to speak.

But a couple of amusing sidelights—and I say this when El Cap was taken over by O'Malia and Smith, some of the amusing things that they instituted; there was an hourly drawing for five dollars from noon until midnight, and then they also put in a small dance floor and had dancing there in the main ground. And I said, the cafe hours were six a.m. to three a.m. daily and a "midnight Mulligan" for fifty cents from midnight to two a.m. And the cafe advertised they could handle parties from two to one hundred, and they had lunches to take out. As I said following the end of the war in 1945, the El Capitan was open round the clock with signs noting "We Never Close," and by Christmas time had fifty-eight employees. And then two years ago on the thirtieth anniversary they had two hundred and sixty-five employees, so they continued growth despite the ups and downs of the town. But one of the big pitches during

the war, and the women probably very well remember this and would have appreciated it, were "free nylons with jackpots," because they seemed to be very difficult to get during the war period and that was a real attraction.

And then one that became a community project, so to speak—the way with the El Cap, was a blackout [bingo]. They decided they'd always had some small bingo games and here came this big blackout with the progressive buildup from week to week until it was hit. And people would look forward to that, and when they set the—I think they would open at five hundred and let it grow and sometimes be up to a thousand dollars. And about half the town would be over there on the night that the big blackout was bein' played. Some playing outside with a speaker system givin' 'em the numbers to play; they'd bring card tables and stand up and play on their own card tables. Then of course the Capitan had monitors out in around it in case there was a quick call, and so it was an indoor-outdoor combination [chuckling] of a bingo game! And it was a big event for Hawthorne.

And about 1950, well there, just about the start of the Korean War and the buildup again in Hawthorne, why Barney expanded some more; and something that few see today or know is there, in the basement of the El Capitan he expended quite a sum and built what he called "The Shamrock Room." It had the ceramic tile type flooring, so that we could have dances. They had banquets; various service clubs met there, and one of the real attractions was a huge fireplace made of native Nevada stone brought in from east of Tonopah by Eddie Connelly, now living in Reno. I think he specialized in headstones and plaques and the like—stone cutting in Reno. And that was a beautiful thing, but as they continued expansion of the El Cap, took everything back upstairs, that was closed off

and became more or less of a service room for the slot machine mechanics and the like. It was rather high class machine shop afterward with that beautiful fireplace. [Chuckling] It still sits underneath there.

And it was then that when he built the Shamrock room, Barney decided he had to go into big-time entertainment as some of the others were doing and did. He had bookings almost I believe year around, might be a lull of two or three days and then another show would come in and one would leave. And some of those who played in that basement of that El Cap—it's always interesting to the old-timers at least—were Eddie Peabody, Nick Lucas, Hilo Hattie and the Hoosier Hotshots.

That was the beginning of quite a love affair between the Hoosier Hotshots and Hawthorne. They returned each year for many years. In fact in their last visit here, one was not well enough to play, but they said they loved to come to Hawthorne, play golf, and play the El Capitan. And one of their last performances was at the El Capitan before they finally disbanded the whole—in fact they were actually disbanded when they decided to get together, and they came up for a tour or five night stand. They wanted to make the trip here, and so they arranged after Barney had come back, why they were back here with all their aids and all their trick instruments. And that was pretty much the pattern for most of the fifties even after the drop-off following the end of the Korean War if you could ever truthfully say it's been ended, but at least the wind-down, as we call it.

And there was another one of those real slow periods, I recall, from 1950—oh—'56 on down to '60 again. And during that low ebb, Jobe Lewis who had built a casino or two up at Lake Tahoe, came into Hawthorne and on the main street just north of Joe's Tavern and across the street from the El Capitan parking

lot, put up a new modern brick building for a casino, bar and restaurant and which he called the Monte Carlo. In other times it probably would have been a jumping and lively place. It was beautifully designed and the old split-level ceiling effect and colors and upholstery and the old split-level ceiling effect and colors and upholstery and the booths that the restaurant had and even at the bar. It was plush, but of course the business wasn't there. And because of Jobe coming in and even though the slow side, the El Cap—that's when the El Cap decided to embark on another expansion program enlarging their own plant considerably more.

And whether it was that expansion program or just a bad business time—what the reasons were I don't know, didn't care to know them; it's their own business—but Barney and the Smith brothers had a very definite split. And as the story was told to me by some of those who were involved, Barney wanted to buy out the Smith Brothers or wanted them to buy him out; and the only thing at the time, as I understood it, the Smiths didn't have the ready cash to buy Barney out and Barney didn't have the cash to buy the Smiths out. So they resolved the issue by having Woody [Woodrow] Loftin, who was then quite prominent in the automobile sales agency and oil distribution and all related business to the automotive industry trade, purchase Barney's share of the El Cap. If my memory serves me correctly, I think it was thirty-six percent. So Woody then became a partner of the Smith brothers in the ownership of the El Capitan, although he took no active part in the management, that is the day-to-day management, corporate management yes, but he did not enter the gaming activity or saloon or restaurant. And that partnership lasted until 1967 when Loftin purchased the Smith brothers' interest. And he in turn, I believe,

sold some of his stock to Barney O'Malia who was at Lake Tahoe at the time; and Barney returned to Hawthorne then to manage the El Capitan for Loftin. It was in '67, and he's been here since that time.

In that intervening period between '60 and '67, O'Malia had worked in Reno a brief period, I recall, at the Riverside, then at the Lake, and then acquired some land and put together a corporation and built Barney's Club which is adjacent to Harrah's [Tahoe] Club just to the north. And Barney the other major stockholder in the corporation with him and active manager, was Dick Chartrand. They had some differences on management policy, and Chartrand was out of Barney's Club, and Barney was the sole manager for a period in there. And shortly after that Chartrand a mile north, had some land and put together an operation, put up the building and called the Nugget [Tahoe]. He had gone to Woody Loftin [chuckling] seekin' some financial assistance, and Woody became a shareholder, whatever it was termed at the time—partner, in the Nugget. This, bear in mind this was all in this intervening period between '60 and '67. After the Nugget was open and going well, there was another change around in the Barney's Club operation, and that was shortly before '67, I believe, because Barney was not out too long before returning to Hawthorne. But the directors put Chartrand back in charge of Barney's Club, and this time Barney [chuckling] ended up not managing it. And with those switches back and forth between the Nugget and Barney's Club, calling in of stock from small stockholders, purchasing it at a good price and all, and Chartrand seemingly always depending upon Woody Loftin as his banker, who'd make the financial arrangements; well Woody Loftin wound up as a fifty percent owner in Barney's Club. He has since sold that interest, and his interest

in the Nugget. And of course as we know at this date, has acquired the Ormsby House in Carson City.

HAWTHORNE AIRPORT

Hawthorne's history of an airport was, for the most part, one of a landing strip up until recent years. They used to land the plane anywhere on the outskirts of the little town where there was some flat land. The one I distinctly remember when they were preparing to open bids to construct the Naval Ammunition Depot in 1929, and I was here during that summer, that a number of prospective bidders on the contract were flown into Hawthorne on a large plane owned by some oil company that they naturally wanted to get the business, and so they treated them all alike, didn't discriminate. And I believe it was a tri-motor, not a Ford, but a Fokker, as they used to call it. Well, that landed just west of A Street where I now live, in the area where the high school football field and our swimming pool and park are located now.

On another occasion, I don't know whether it was the wind or it was too rocky out there, Harry Frost and Ted Morrill came down on a visit one day. We used to do quite a bit of business with Reno Printing in those days, and they'd fly in, spend part of the day, and fly back. And they had a small plane. It was a Ford by the way, and not the radial engine type, but more like a V-8 and enclosed cowl, and made a nice approach on the circle, came down and landed smoothly. And about the time that Ted went to finally brake it—put on the brakes and kill the engine, the thing decided to turn over; and it pancaked right over. And we had to rush out [chuckling] to see if they could get out—the both of 'em came [more chuckling] out of the upside

down plane, and I don't know what they might've left in Ted's little cockpit. See, they didn't have cabins; it was just a two-seater cockpit. But the thing that always struck me was that Ted Morrill had the fire extinguisher in his hand, and he's runnin' as fast as he could away from that plane [laughing]. That went on.

Then they started expanding the Naval Depot in 1939. William P. Neal came in and the Navy would have frequent flights in from areas, they found that that little area uptown was too far from the administration building two miles away; so they went north of our town cemetery and bladed out some—two or three criss-cross runways, dirt runways, and with an outlet that took them just about a quarter mile away from the main gate when the people would get out of the plane and drive off.

It stayed that just a—more or less of a landing strip until after Pearl Harbor, be '42 or very early 1943. And the depot was expanding and growing larger all the time, the Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox decided to make a visit to the Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot. Prior to that time, the Navy could never obtain ten or a hundred dollars in funding to blacktop any of those landing strips. Well, at the announcement that the man himself was coming in, why somehow or other they got authorization from Washington to use funds that might have been intended for something else and put crews to work immediately. And they did oil, as we call it, oil surface. It was actually a cold mix, not the hot mix we know today, but the old style as they do. Used to oil the roads prior to the plant mix arrangement where the oil'd be spread hot and cool off right away, but it wasn't the heated plant mix as we know. This asphalt type, *bituminous* or *bituminous* or however they pronounce it. And they did one

long strip then; the north-south, as we call it, was oil surfaced and just in time because they didn't know what size plane the secretary of the Navy would be coming in, and they didn't want rocks flying up as they frequently did and take a chunk out of one of the propellers.

Well, the day that the secretary of the Navy accompanied by Captain Blandy, later a very prominent admiral, W. H. Blandy made their appearance, they came in a little Lockheed Lodestar, and they used about one-third of the runway. Well, that ended all chances of getting any further funding to enlarge the Hawthorne airport, since the secretary of the Navy and captain—almost and then later an admiral could get in and out in a Lockheed Lodestar, there's no need for a Hawthorne Navy Airport. And that was the Navy's airport, by the way. Those from town, civilians had used it until late 1940, I believe, when President Roosevelt issued an executive order prohibiting any civilian flying over Hawthorne, and we went for about six years where no civilian plane could fly over Hawthorne from '40 to about '46, about a year after the end of the war in Japan.

Following the war an arrangement was made with the Navy to turn the airport, as we call it—Hawthorne Airport, to the county—turn it over, transfer it, but always with the reservation that in time of war or great emergency, the Navy could take it back and also that all branches of the federal government have full use of it without any landing fees or any charges. But the county then assumed the maintenance of the airport. The Navy got out of it 'cause there's been very little maintenance. Little was done to really improve the airport other than occasionally if they had a little extra hot oil, whether they conned it from the highway department or the contractor or county or some reclaimed

oil that they'd spread out there to keep the dust down. It wouldn't hold the rocks down 'cause they'd fly as the props would churn the ground as well as the air.

BONANZA AIRLINES

And I believe it was a very short time thereafter—I'd have to check my record—I believe it was about 1947 when Bonanza Airlines was developed. Ed Converse, who had been administrative assistant as I recall to H. Styles Bridges, the senator from Maine, had had considerable to do with aviation legislation in Washington, came west—I don't know if he located in California first or not, but was in Las Vegas—and decided that the time was ripe to start an airline between Las Vegas and Reno.

It had been tried in the 1920s when Roscoe Turner, later of somewhat prominent fame with the ever-shining boots that he would wear, odd-style boot, and the waxed moustache, and a brilliant flyer, he had a few friends finance him and had one Lockheed Vega at that time in the twenties. They made a few flights to Las Vegas. I recall they flew into Hawthorne on one occasion when Fred Balzar, then governor, was coming home to visit. But that was short-lived, that Lockheed Vega.

Well, Converse went up and down the state with the briefcase, appeared before the commissioners in Tonopah. We were then incorporated in Hawthorne, he appeared before our city council seeking support and the grand service he was going to give us with this new airline. Everyone got behind it. It was serving Kingman, Arizona; Las Vegas; Tonopah; Hawthorne; Minden; Carson; and then on into Reno.

He started it, but was lookin' for the subsidy of carrying the mail. So, we all threw

our weight behind him to get the mail subsidy, show that we would use the mail service and needed it, and it also developed considerable passenger service. And it was a good service, particularly goin' from Hawthorne to Las Vegas, and we'd go to Reno, transact business all day long, come back on the afternoon flight. The later afternoon flight would come in about three-thirty, get to Reno, be home at five o'clock or so. And this was all bein' done with one airplane, one DC-3.

I recall Tom Wilson was handling the advertising for 'em and also was tryin' to help keep the Virginia-Truckee railroad alive, and commented one time in a joking way, he says [chuckling], he says, "Well, I have two large accounts. I have an airline and a railroad." He says, "The airline has one plane, the railroad has one engine!"

And stickin' to those early days, another amusing, interesting memorable occasion, we were going to Elko—say we, Lions and their wives, we were a young, gung-ho Lions Club, one of the newest in the state; and we were gonna capture all prizes for the greatest number in attendance, who had travelled the greatest distance. And, oh, they had two or three other novelty prizes; like achievement day for the school kids, we were out to get it, and we all pooled our resources and chartered an airplane out of southern California through Bonanza.

Bonanza made all the arrangements; and we were to leave at three-thirty or four o'clock in the afternoon to fly from Hawthorne to Elko. Some of the people had never flown in a plane before. It was a riot. I think they had those DC-3s for twenty-one passengers, and we had twenty-three or twenty-four in there at the time. But the southern California outfit kept tryin' to get that plane operational, and about four o'clock served notice that they just couldn't get the plane off the ground or

someone wouldn't let it off the ground. And we [chuckling] were all out at the airport in Hawthorne tryin' to get to Elko.

Well, we rushed in town and made frantic calls to Florence Murphy, who was the real backbone of that Bonanza. I always did think she got a bum deal from the outfit, brilliant gal, good flyer herself, good business manager. Well, we put the heat on Bonanza so much they said, "Well, we can take you up, but it'll be late. As soon as our southbound flight leaves Reno, got one comin' down about five or so, returns the passengers to Las Vegas." They flew that same plane deadheaded back to Reno. It made its morning southbound flight from Reno and down to Las Vegas; the northbound from Las Vegas was cancelled. They met their requirements on the afternoon flight from Las Vegas up to Reno, and then he flew across to Elko, picked us up. Now the afternoon southbound from Reno to Las Vegas had to be cancelled—that was the way it worked. They cancelled one at each end. They were really [chuckling] workin' that plane overtime! [Laughter] They had wonderful pilots by the way, those early day pilots.

This was great, but then as so often is the story, that some of them can't stand prosperity, or when they do make it rich, they kind of forget what neighborhood they lived in. The thing began to expand; they finally got into Phoenix, and I don't think they—they might have just gotten into Palm Springs or the Pomona, Upland, Downey area, down there that they were serving. As long as they stayed out of Los Angeles, it was all right and they'd picked up a couple more planes.

Now business began to boom between Reno and Las Vegas, Las Vegas and Reno, flight-passenger business; and a lot of the passengers complainin' about the "milk-run"—had to put down at Tonopah, get up in the air, they'd put down at Hawthorne, get

up in the air, put down at Carson-Minden airport.

I think they dropped Kingman and Minden-Carson first, if I'm not mistaken. Then they started to go to work on getting rid of Hawthorne and Tonopah, and it was not too difficult to do. They started out with this argument, "use it or lose it," and which I later coined the phrase "they used us and they abused us." By chopping off one flight, there went the neighborhood. The passengers disappeared.

They would fly in here about three-thirty; you could board the plane, fly to Reno, and the only business you could transact was on the ramp at the Reno Airport because in about fifteen or twenty minutes, it was turnin' around and coming back, either that or stay overnight, and then come back the next afternoon. We might as well drive a car to do that, and there were no serviceable connections going south. So, by choking off their own trade from this area, they then showed CAB or whoever it was at the time (it was the CAA before it was the Federal Aviation Administration), whichever one granted the permits, you know, to discontinue the line. Well, we lost the battle, of course, on continued service and putting it back the way it was. We lost out all around, when they [Bonanza] divorced us we parted anything but friends.

I recall writin' a few articles about what a lousy outfit I thought it was and the way they treated us and that, and I said, "You know they used us and abused us." I recall George Vargas stoppin' me one time—he was the attorney for them at the time—(and I should have mentioned George among modern airport, even though we have just converted a Babbitt house as the terminal, but to bring it up to standard, enlarge two of those runways. And we worked out a project

in the early sixties under one of those many economic development acts—I believe it was under President [John F.] Kennedy—one of his crash programs to put people to work and to improve public facilities, and everything from waste water control to improving transportation. And we got onto that, and we had been way back at the tag end of all the little communities in Nevada who'd ever received FAA funds, the Federal Aviation Administration.

Reno had practically built their airport and added onto it through those, and Las Vegas got a bundle out of them and other places well ahead of us, Winnemucca, Elko, Ely.

So, we qualified for about one hundred and twenty-three thousand dollars, or I believe that had to be met with matching funds; I think something like on a sixty-forty basis or however it was. Well, we didn't have that kind of money to match the funds until we looked at a typical government program to create employment, stimulate business and under this Depressed Area Act—well, with the heavy layoffs at the Ammunition Depot following Korea and before the Vietnam buildup, we qualified as a depressed area. And the idea then was do you have a project ready? Well, we thought we had two or three like these beach ramps—these developments out here, the Tamarack Beach and Sportsman's Beach that came along later incidentally, under Kennedy's crash program. Well, we qualified for seventy-five thousand dollars under the Depressed Area Act program, and this came through Housing and Urban Development. They have so many it's a Hydra-headed monster, I guess you would call it, but they got into it. Well, we finally got our qualification to use those funds toward our airport. We still were a little short, so we got an emergency loan, the county did, from the

state for twelve-thousand five-hundred. Now we had enough money to do the two-hundred thousand dollar airport job [chuckling], and it has been said that it wasn't only the first, but possibly the only time that federal funds were used to match federal funds. And at the time it was legal; they changed the law after, after the Hawthorne Airport got going.

And it first broke and what started the whole thing, the *Aviation Daily* published in Washington, D.C., on March 5, 1963, had this brief item in it:

Nevada town with 2,838 residents, no airline service, and only one industry—gambling, will receive almost a quarter of a million dollars in federal aid for its airport. The federal government will spend \$220,500 improving an airport in Hawthorne, Nevada, which has not had airline service in two years. The state of Nevada will add some \$12,500 to the improvement. FAA through Federal Aid to Airports Program will kick in \$145,300, and Area Redevelopment Agency will contribute \$75,200 for the improvement of existing runways at the Hawthorne Municipal Airport and the installation of runway lighting. Census figures for 1960 show the urban Hawthorne area to have a population of 2,838. Nearby Babbitt has some 2,159 persons. The only industry in the area other than gambling casinos, which are legal in Nevada, is a Naval Ammunition Depot which employs some nine hundred and fourteen persons. There are no airlines currently serving Hawthorne or have any filed applications to do so. Bonanza dropped service to the area some two years ago. At one

time several supplementary carriers were bringing in customers for the gambling casinos, but this had also stopped.

That was the Fresno flight, the others came later on.

But when *Aviation Daily* broke that, my God, the backwash hit the fan because Bible, Jack Carpenter—writing me letters, you know—”Now, what have you gotten us into?” And this one is from Jack Carpenter, ’63:

On Saturday last, a reporter from the *Aviation Daily* finally awakened to the fact that the Hawthorne airport is under construction. He called to discuss this matter with me and was amazed that the government would go through with such a project after statements he said had been attributed to the ARA and FAA that plans were temporarily halted. I proceeded to fill him in on why Hawthorne needs this installation and at his request, sent him supporting documents including the front page of your June nineteenth newspaper. I think he did a creditable job in the explanation where he called our office with the exception that he said nothing about the Air Force which, as you know, is moving into Hawthorne. And the last paragraph of his article graphically points out what an excellent job Senator Bible is doing for your community. It also points out how stands your Congressmen take are sometimes put in the category of pork-barrel activities. You and I of course know that this could in no way be interpreted as such because it is definitely an asset to the city and to the state of Nevada, and I’m sure that

you’ll see a greater growth in the area due to the very fine installation now under construction.

Then he goes on about how Denver Dickerson’ll be on his way to Guam or something.

Well after *Aviation Daily* wrote that story, then the *Denver Post*:

GOP Preparing to Bombard Area Redevelopment Program. The Republicans are preparing to give one of the Kennedy administration’s favorite programs, Area Redevelopment, a real going over in Congress. The administration has proposed authorizing another four hundred and fifty-five million, and the Republicans of the House are fighting mad. The GOP says that twenty-four percent of the dollars in loans approved between July 1, 1962, and March 25, 1963, went to finance motels and hotels. They claimed that was never the intent of Congress. The ARA Program was designed to help private firms provide jobs in areas of high unemployment and to assist in financing public facilities in these areas. One ‘distressed’ area is Mineral County, Nevada where the median family income is \$5,946 a year. The county’s population went up 13.8 percent between 1950 and ’60, while that of the county seat, Hawthorne, rose 52 percent. ARA granted \$75,200 to help modernize the Hawthorne Municipal Airport providing five new jobs, and local reports said the important part of the airport’s business was derived from visitors who came to gamble at the Hawthorne casino.

And then it goes on about Duluth [Minnesota] and Denver and some of their complaints.

And the *Wall Street Journal*:

Gambling with Jobs. The Area Redevelopment Administration set up to attack the problems of so-called depressed areas has been finding itself under attack for its gambling propensities. To be sure, some Washington officials insist the agency has been moving along much too slowly. In its nearly two years of existence, it has managed to okay only 84.8 million of loans and grants for public and private ventures aimed at creating new jobs, little more than a third of the funds it has had available. And conscientious federal agency ought to be able to spend more rapidly than that. On the other hand, as Donald Maffat reported in this paper the other day, there are others who claim the ARA may be going fast, recklessly enough anyway that it has been making some pretty strange moves. The agency, for example, granted \$75,200 to Mineral County, Nevada, to improve the Hawthorne airport, though much of the airport's traffic consists of customers of local gambling casinos, an odd target for federal aid.

And then this is the Tulsa, Oklahoma paper, March thirteenth of '68, the large headline, four column headline:

Desolate Gaming Town to Get \$220,500 in U.S. Airport Handout. The federal government is about to plunk down a quarter of a million

dollars to help develop tourism in a desolate Nevada town whose major attraction is a gambling casino. Tiny Hawthorne, population 2,838, is going to use the money to improve its airport which has not had airline service for two years. To qualify for the \$220,500 handout the state of Nevada is required to put up only twelve thousand funds. The Area Redevelopment Agency created to help depressed communities has drafted a release showing it will contribute \$75,200 with the Federal Aviation Agency kicking in the balance of \$145,300. ARA is the agency which has agreed to purchase 8.5 million in revenue bonds to finance the ten million Lake Eufaula Lodge project in eastern Oklahoma. While the ABA was happy to ballyhoo the Nevada project, the FAA was not so eager. The FAA spokesman reported it has the proposal under consideration, but has not approved it. The aviation agency pressed for comment, revealed it has instructed ABA to take its name out of the release. ABA said it would go along, but insisted the FAA would make no share of the dole available. The initial press release distributed to Nevada Congressmen says the FAA money has been approved. Quite naturally the federal government cannot be party to helping a gambling enterprise, but the fact remains the casino is Hawthorne's number one tourist attraction. The ABA spokesman said, 'The government prefers to play this down and emphasize instead beautiful Walker Lake which could become a fisherman's paradise. Bonanza airline

pulled out of Hawthorne two years ago when its passenger traffic dropped to only fifteen in some months. Hawthorne was a bustling community in World War II when the Navy operated a huge ordnance depot there. That was and is its only industry, with only nine persons now employed at the almost idle facility. The whole economy slipped badly after the War. Before we left even a cab company had gone out of business, a Bonanza spokesman related. If you flew into Hawthorne, you had to walk or bum a ride to get from the airport into town. Chartered planes operating mostly out of San Francisco have been flying gambling patrons to Hawthorne. It is not likely that many people will fly to Hawthorne just for the fishing.

Oh, we had a great time. [Laughing] Somewhere I answered the *Wall Street Journal* and told 'em it was the first time I ever wrote a letter to the editor.

This is from Bible himself:

Enclosed is a copy of a letter which is self-explanatory concerning request of the "Bull Pup" program. In a separate enclosure I want you to note a comment which has been published here recently by the *Aviation Daily*. Since the editor is a good friend of mine, I would like you to contribute something in your columns with respect to a good rebuttal. I think that Jack discussed this matter with you, even though at that time he did not know that such an article would appear. The *Aviation Daily* is circulated to many in the aviation field and allied business firms. The

office has also had a call from one of the local newspapermen concerning this grant. I know you realize it is impossible for me to lay the blame at your doorstep for this activity, and I'm sure you can come up with some good suggestions as to why this airport is essential, so that I may send them on to the editor of *Aviation Daily*. With warmest personal regards, cordially, Alan Bible.

[Laughing] This is my summary to Bible:

To borrow a phrase from Vaughn Meader I should like to make a judgement about the article in March fifth issue of *Aviation Daily* regarding the Hawthorne airport project.

And I list facts, opinion, you know like the attorney general, Alan always hits the facts, the opinion and conclusion, and the conclusion I said;

Bring this bird with you on your next trip to Hawthorne and we'll shock hell out of him by proving the necessity, validity and wise investment in the project. One of the editors of the *Aviation Daily* is: a) a nice young guy who has been handed a package of snow by some disgruntled, sinkey-type chronic objector; b) a middle-aged character who must have a whipping boy; c) a cranky old (and I spelled it P-H-A-R-T) who doesn't like people. [Chuckling] As Bonanza grew fatter it conveniently forgot the small areas which made its beginning possible and deliberately changed schedules to render service to Hawthorne of no value at all.

And that's one of the things that Vargas nailed me about, you know, can you prove that they changed it for that purpose? I said, "Can you prove that he had any other reason, what would be the purpose to change 'em? And here's what shook George, "It would be interesting to learn just how much money the federal government has poured into the Bonanza airlines operation since its inception and the amount of current subsidy. In fact, we openly challenge our U.S. Senators, Alan Bible and Howard Cannon, and Congressman Walter Baring to dig up those figures and make them public." Well, we got through with that. We got the airport built and finished, got a lawsuit out of that. The contractor and the inspector got into a dispute whether they were fracturing the rock, the larger gravel. And they said that you put well washed but unbroken rocks sections, you know, into your hot mix they put down 'cause those heavy planes come in, the roll of the wheels, the rock'll start rolling; and you'll see at many street intersections how automobiles can actually push the oil forward. And we had a big hassle with the contractor over that, and it was only recently, I think, that the case was dismissed for lack of prosecution or some other reason. He had sued Mineral County and that thing was hanging fire for all these years.

But, it was just before or right at the time that we went for the airport project, that the El Capitan had started its airline to southern California. They had been usin' these flights out of Fresno. In fact to digress again, that's how Dick Chartrand first got into this area and into gambling in Nevada.

He used to fly these charter flights to Hawthorne from Fresno. That's where he became well acquainted with Barney O'Malia, Woody Loftin and the others. He's the one that was later on in Barney's Club, and then one

morning when he stepped on the starter, that was the last time he stepped on the starter, up at Lake Tahoe. He was one of the owners of Barney's Club. Someone put a bomb under the hood; that was the end of Chartrand.

But they switched to the southern California area because they could get much more traffic and through these agencies that put together short trip junkets; they were flying Burbank to Hawthorne. They had a DC-3, and then they later bought the little Canadian plane, a Heron, for a while had two airplanes. And then I think they got rid of the Heron, and then finally wound up with another DC-3 or were back to one, but that's the one that—. About '65 or '66 in through there, the El Cap plane crashed down in Inyo County, California, on a slope below Mt. Whitney near Bishop and so many were killed. So that ended the only or the last commercial airline we had. And I say commercial that was actually Mineral County Airlines doing business as Hawthorne, Nevada Airlines, this spin-off of different holding corporation.

After the death of so many people, I wrote about that strongly criticizing the press, radio and TV. Someone created an expression for them, the "gamblers special," which was factually incorrect and unfair to at least one lady I know whose mother and her little boy were killed in that plane. Little boy was goin' back to visit his grand mother, and wasn't a little boy either—just come back from Vietnam, but the grandmother'd flown up here with him. Paying passengers were entitled to go buy a ticket for ten dollars [chuckling] to fly to Hawthorne if they didn't want to gamble, and occasionally some engineers and others who had work to do at the depot did take that as a fast travel way, although the main purpose for having it was to bring in the tourists, gambling tourists, into the El Cap, but in no way could it be

restricted to a gamblers special, otherwise they never would have gotten their permit. And that was one of the reasons they would allow a passenger to get on, you know, for ten dollars, but they never went near the El Cap. And that is the last semblance of any regular commercial flight in or out of Hawthorne.

We had a little charter service later on, there's two or three planes set out at the airport now, but it's strictly private planes operating there now with the exception of both planes and helicopters that you'll frequently see out there, use it as a base for prospecting.

This new, modern, exotic prospecting with all the instruments and infrared that's done with several mining companies, a number of those are in and out of here all the time. They do aerial mapping. They claim they have these very sensitive instruments that pick up the information they want. There's a considerable amount of that still going on.

The only last thing on the airport, there're supposed to be two small outfits out of California seeking space, at least privileges, to operate small industrial business. One specializes in making drill bits, I guess you'd call 'em, but for surgical instruments and tools—drilling bits and all. And they've been talkin' about it though for six months and appear to be a legitimate outfit, but I'm gun shy. We've been fooled by so many con artists that I'm just gun shy 'cause if the Pope flew in here tomorrow, even though he strongly resembled the one that I'd seen on TV or something, I'd still ask for a few credentials [laughing] and send out or get hold of Jordan Crouch or someone and say, "Can you put a check with one of your friends over there at the Roman "dago" bank there [chuckling], and see if this is the man himself or is this the imposter that he's tryin' to borrow fifty dollars from, and I want to know for sure?"

So, I'm just gun shy about it, and there's this small outfit supposed to be doing something and then a second one, I don't know what their name was, little piddling manufacturers, but nothin's developed out of that. So that's where the airport—and they keep on improving it—they have a nice little terminal there now and good radio facilities, and it's quite frequently used like these CAP fly-in breakfasts and commercially there are a number of people, particularly those with private planes—contractors and all—since they've been buildin' this demil plant. If any planes come from Fallon Naval Station, they use that, although most of the transportation between Fallon and Hawthorne is by helicopter, pad is located inside the Depot area right next to our club house at the golf course.

For a small town [chuckling] that no large airport—in fact that was a forty-eight hundred foot runway, by the way, that after all that publicity we received why it still sits there, and it's not bein' used to fly gamblers in, as I mentioned, since the crash of the El Cap plane. So some of these eager beaver potential award winning writers that have to throw a lot of drama into it, might want to come back and take a look at it now, and say, "Well, maybe it wasn't a bad investment," 'cause if we'd had the seventy-five thousand ourselves, Fleischmann or somebody else had given us a gift, we'd've gotten a hundred and forty odd from FAA; we're entitled to it as much as Reno, Vegas, Winnemucca, Ely, Elko, and nothin' would have been said about it that I can see, because we are entitled to it because they have gambling casinos in Reno and they have some in Las Vegas. Somewhere in there I think I wrote about that, that anyone ever checks the ratio of gamblers who are flying into Reno and the ratio of gamblers who fly into Vegas usin' the airport facilities, paid for

in part of large measure by the same federal funds we were using.

UFO'S AND SPY PLANES

The famous “flying saucer” episode we had that caused me to take quite a ribbing not only locally, but out of Reno because I wrote quite a story about this phenomenon, whatever it was, that we’d witnessed one day; and it occurred in this way. I was just returnin’ from lunch and I had a young fellow workin’ for me, just mentioned Jimmy Ellis, a grown man now livin’ in California. We ran in and called out one other employee and some other people there; we stood in an alley down at my old shop on F Street. We first thought that there was someone droppin’ circulars ‘cause we’d see these two white objects flipping in the sun, and we’d use the telephone wire as sort of a radar, to screen ‘em, to hold ‘em in sight. And it was fascinating; for about fifteen minutes they would just seem to glide and go back up in the air [gestures skyward] and move around.

At that time, why, the flying saucer or UFO was quite a popular event. We probably made one slight error, just before we looked up to see these, there had been a heavy or a large plane going from east to west in that same general area which could place it north of town, almost as far as the north end of the lake [Walker Lake] going through that—. And we’d heard that plane, then these two units came into sight. We watched ‘em for about fifteen minutes, and the way they would seem to glide, drop, dip, go back up in the air and finally disappeared; they both seemed to be under power. And they headed straight west the same as that plane did.

Since then in later years, I convinced myself and with no confirmation from Air Force officers that I’ve talked to many times and sometimes with a smile, but I think that

that was probably the forerunner of our U-2 spy ship, because one of the U-2s that crashed after all their testing and put on line out of Edwards air base [California], crashed over in Lincoln County, the mountains near Pioche; and I remember that was quite an incident to get people in from Nellis Air [Air Force Base, Clark County, Nevada] as fast as they could and block off, let no one get near that plane, capture those instruments.

About three years ago I had the privilege of looking into one of the U-2s, same style that Gary Powers got shot down over Russia, as we recall, and was used as a almost supersonic but it was our super spy ship, and still, as I understand it, bein’ used. And the make of that ship, it’s virtually to me a glider with a powerful engine in it, it can glide or it can go into heavy power and move fast.

The surprising thing to me, I forget how many, it runs into millions I think per unit or maybe one million, but it was over a million dollars to build one of those planes at that time and loaded with electronic equipment, cameras, other things, that there was barely enough space for the pilot to sit and operate. And it was just so—almost like a pencil-type that—the extreme width of the wings—is what impressed me—I think that is what gave it its gliding power because while sitting in this hangar near the end of either wing was a vertical dowel, as we would call them, like you put a block under something, but metal dowels with little wheels on the end, and that’s to hold that wing up. The wing was so wide that—and that pencil shaped fuselage that it just wouldn’t balance.

I did learn from people I was talkin’ to and this was at NASA’s [National Aeronautics and Space Administration] unit there in Sunnyvale, Ames Laboratory, that as the plane took off those dowels remained underneath and why they had the wheels on it—to keep the wing from tippin’ and crashin’. And this

is what they told me; I did not see it in—but it would go roaring down the field and it took off under its own power from the ground. Once in the air—as they left they had a way of releasing them as though they were dropping a landing gear instead of folding it up as they do on more conventional planes; and as I guess on the landing they have to have a fast jeep or pickup arrangement, trained crews—as it starts down or hits the runway, they have to maintain identical speed and with a truck on either end ready to keep the wing from going [gesture teetering]. Now I got into a little background of my personal observation of the U-2 and for this reason try to connect it with the so-called saucers.

It is now and has been for a long time, my impression that in those days, testing that original U-2 in these remote areas, they might have even been on a tow line, I don't know for safety or whether it was a "mother" ship watching or radioing, but the fact that one large airplane was in the vicinity of these two so-called flying saucers we saw. But when they did take off, they took off under power after they appeared to just be havin' a beautiful day of gliding like the hang-gliders or these gliders down by Bishop. They look very much like them, but it was so distant and so high that it was—the way we could catch them was they were silver colored at the time.

I believe later U-2 spy ships went varied colors—black or OD, I don't know, or whether camouflage or what they used on 'em—I imagine much depending on the nature of their mission. And what convinced me or what still substantiates my own conclusion in my own mind, but I've since learned that even after the incident with Gary Powers crashing in Russia, whether he ran into an air current problem or the Russians actually had guns that could bring 'em down at that extremely high altitude.

I have been told that one of the tests made on the U-2 and probably after one of those Russian sweeps, came in, I don't, they'd never tell me how much fuel they carried, where they have to refuel, whether it's from one of these planes in the air or how, but this pilot going virtually at full speed cut his engine, motor (I call it engine), cut power over Elmendorf Air Force Base in Alaska, running a test to see how far he could glide through manipulation of the air currents in that pencil-like job. He landed in Texas, without ever resuming power. Now this is what [whistling] a former U-2 pilot told me, I don't know.

Another one that took off from New Orleans, he said, was goin' out over the Gulf [Gulf of Mexico], had a malfunction of some kind and lost radio contact; and they tried to pick up and no way, and they sent the fastest planes they had out searching the general area, going around. And he said it was not until two or three days later, why, he said reports filtered back; that plane had crashed in South America. Now that is the extreme speed of that U-2 and maneuverability of it, with or without power, and so I just satisfied myself that we did not get to see any men from Mars coming out and talkin' to us or anything, but I think this is what we saw back there in the late forties as a forerunner to the U-2. It's a plane, well, it's just not a conventional plane, put it that way; it has its one mission and that's to keep us informed—a spy ship.

If I may switch now from the aerial side of it and speaking of spy ships, to an interesting, at least to me, situation, and this occurred, well, when Governor Sawyer was still in office. We were having the annual Armed Forces Day celebration. This was the early sixties too, and the Governor came, had the cocktail party out at the commanding officer's house; and the Naval officers and Air Force officers were here then, some from town and greeted Grant

(as we knew him), visiting around. And one of the guests that evening was an officer who formerly had been stationed at Hawthorne as an executive officer, and he had just had two or three assignments after leaving Hawthorne. He had just returned from a cruise aboard an oceanographic ship (I have a hard time saying it) theoretically to go down and see why male shrimp don't talk to the female or the crustaceans do this and that. And this oceanographic ship which was loaded with equipment to study marine life, was one of the sister ships of the *Pueblo*—strictly spy ships.

Of course, the Russians knew as much about 'em, I guess, as the Americans because this ship was invited to visit a port in Russia, a new port above Murmansk [Archangel]. It was the first American ship into a Russian port since the end of World War II, and the first American ship *ever* in that new port. And he said if he ever got involved in a cat and mouse game, that was one of his greatest visits. His name was Commander Jim Bess; he's retired now and living in Arizona.

When our state department and the defense department and the Navy department and everyone else cleared all the Kissinger-type negotiations and all to make the visit, and they had constructionists and they were trained and retrained. And they set the date always some time a little later on, so that on that particular cruise they could remove all of their best, most modern, super-exotic equipment and replace it with something that they knew the Russians already had, taken from the Germans, the Japanese, or something, and complete replacement of equipment because they knew the Russians would be boarding the ship. And this was the American way of saying to the "Big Bear" well, you're not gonna see everything we have or how much money we have in the bank.

He said by contrast the ones who came aboard, civilian clothes, the Russians, one was the equivalent of the mayor of the city where this new port was located; another one, I think, was listed as the chief librarian, and another had some kind of an important governmental civilian position. And he says, "Hell," he says, "you could tell which one was the captain, which was the commander, which was the army, air force major, merely by the manner in which they walked because they're so well disciplined, and who walked forward, who walked with and after, and who waited till the other one spoke. And," he says, "it was funny as hell because they were tryin' to hide everything from the Russians, the Russians tryin' to conceal their identity."

Then the Russians took them ashore, but no one got to go two blocks away from the general area which had been outlined for them to visit. And he says, "We saw damn little of that new port in Russia; and they saw damn little of what the *Rehobeth*," (that was the name of the ship) he says, "carried."

And in the course of the conversation, why, I happened to bring this up talkin' about the saucer deal, and Governor Sawyer said [chuckling] to Commander Bess—Governor was fascinated, if you're ever talkin' to Grant, he'll tell ya this—and he said, "Well," he said, "we'll have to admit," he said, "our side is clever, their side is pretty clever." The governor in some way asked him that wouldn't it be difficult, you know, for them bein' military people and all, to fully conceal or to cover themselves, provide cover for themselves some way, and he was questioning about the difference, you know, in the American approach and the Russian approach.

Commander Bess blurted out, he said, "Well, Governor," he says, "surely you know politicians are the same the world over." And with that we all about cracked up [laughing]

including the Governor, and the Captain at the time out here, more or less, upbraided the Commander, because after all, the Governor is a politician, you don't offend him. And it was rather amusing because the captain felt the commander had spoken out of turn, and the Commander didn't give a damn; he was tellin' the truth.

One that I just kind of wanted to work in among many of the humorous incidents we've had out at the depot, but in line with what we're tryin' to do now, and then we know the story of the *Pueblo*, which incidentally, I asked this commander, who was just a few months ago visiting here in Hawthorne, what his position would have been, what he would have done. And it's always—hindsight's always so good, the Monday morning quarterbacks, and the beating that Bucher [Commander Lloyd M.], whoever it was on the *Pueblo*, when he allowed it to be captured. And he said, "Well," he said, "sometimes it's just the difference in individuals, but, they'd've taken me dead or alive, but they'd never've gotten that ship. I'd've scuttled it 'cause they'd never have a chance to get the equipment out of it, if it's down in the bottom 'cause then you know, we could send in air cover."

But it was somewhat the same as Pearl Harbor, the hours, the days, you know; it was daytime here, nighttime there and the like, that it pointed up that we still don't have the complete instantaneous coverage that we really need, no matter what the doves and the peace-lovers and all believe; you have to have planes in the air twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week at strategic points.

MINERAL COUNTY POLITICS

When I first landed in Hawthorne in 1929, the county officials at the time—old Sam Kelso, as we called him, because he seemed

to be old as the hills then—I believe he was around eighty, was our county clerk and treasurer, and had been around the county since Mineral County was formed, or a little before, and prior to that had served as auditor and recorder. Our auditor and recorder at the time was John J. Connelly, J. J. Connelly as he was known, much better known as "Old Pink Whiskers." He wore a goatee and a beard, and he was an avowed Marxist. But you had to be careful in describing his political affiliation; he was a member of the Socialist-Labor party. How well I recall one time in a discussion, I referred to Mr. Connelly and pointed to his success in getting elected as an independent candidate, as a Socialist. And he was on me in a split second and told me that he didn't appreciate bein' described as a Socialist, that he was a Socialist-Labor, and if I didn't know the difference between the two parties, I'd better get back to the books and do a little studying, 'cause, he says, the Socialists were the ones who were wrecking the Socialist-Labor party.

And believe me, I took his advice and I did quite a bit of reading. They were both Marxist of a brand or another but they were no more the same party, or *are* if there're any remnants of them left, then you'd say that George McGovern and George Wallace, simply because they're Democrats, have the same goals.

It was interesting in that Connelly, I think, would have been unbeatable as auditor and recorder; but in 1930, D. M. Buckingham had returned from Reno where he'd had a store. He'd lived in Hawthorne—I say returned because he'd been secretary-treasurer to the Lucky Boy Consolidated Mining Company, which the president was his father-in-law, Senator John H. Miller. And Buckingham filed for the office of clerk and treasurer held by Kelso who was also a candidate for

reelection. Buck was Republican; I believe Kelso was, but he might have run independent that year or else maybe Buck beat him in the primary. But Connelly decided since Kelso was old and in trouble, that he would move up from auditor and recorder to clerk and treasurer. Why, I don't know. They paid the same, and the auditor-recorder's job was much easier than clerk and treasurer. And Buckingham defeated Kelso—I'm sure it was in the primary—and then went on to beat Connelly. That was the last time Kelso sought office.

Connelly, two years later, was in a three-way race for state senator with Johnny Miller, the Republican, the incumbent, and a woman running on the Democratic ticket. Miller was reelected, although he had a good hassle in the campaign. The same year of '30, the district attorney was not colorful, but odd, restrained, chubby fella, older bachelor type, C. C. Ward, Clarence Ward, who wore Ben Franklin-type glasses some of the time and the other time (those ones where you left off the top half of the glasses), always down on the end of his nose. He was originally from Missouri, he'd been admitted to the practice of law in Nevada by reciprocity, and four years earlier had pulled something of an upset in defeating incumbent DA, Jay H. White, who thereafter became secretary to Governor Fred Balzar, and adjutant general, as they called it, in Balzar, Griswold, Kirman, and I think even in Garville's time. Ward was a one-termer and was defeated in the following election by Fred L. Wood, who had moved from Reno down to Hawthorne, formerly taught school in Yerington, I think for a time at Fallon, eventually admitted to the bar, was practicing in Reno, not doing too well financially; and so he replaced Ward as the district attorney. The sheriff at the time was Henry Boerlin, staunch Democrat. Wood, incidentally was

Republican; Ward was the Democrat. And another prominent Democrat, T. R. "Dick" Pledge, filed against Boerlin that year. Pledge operated a saloon in town, having come in from around Broken Hills [Mineral County, Nevada] and some of the other mining camps; he'd been at Seven Troughs [Pershing County, Nevada] and all. Boerlin backed away from the primary fight, filed as an independent; and he won, stayed in office.

And our county commissioners, there was a little upheaval then, but that'd take a book in itself to remember our county commissioners. They would rotate back and forth, in and out. At the time, it was an old fella, Joe Marshall from Hawthorne, John Wichman from the river country, we called it, over East Walker River country, the precincts of Sweetwater and Cambridge; and B. F. Baker, old Kentucky colonel appearing type fella out of Missouri, early day family around Mason Valley [Lyon County, Nevada]. And, of course, in that year why, Marshall lost, Wichman was a holdover, Baker was opposed. Baker, the Democrat, was opposed by Sol Summerfield, the Republican, and T. O. McKinnon, young businessman who owned a garage in Mina which he acquired after selling his goat ranch to the U.S. Navy on Mt. Grant when they started the Naval Depot. T. O. ran as an independent; he was a Texas Republican, but ran as an independent. Summerfield won by something like seven or twelve votes. I mentioned those two or three commissioners races because this was just a complete go-around as long as they were around, and 'cause two years later in '32, it was the same line-up again with Baker and Summerfield, McKinnon. This time McKinnon won by seven votes. When the last precinct came in from Sweetwater, it wiped out Summerfield's lead of four votes.

I want to stress that because that prompted an election contest, contest before the court.

At the moment I don't recall whether it was Judge Dysart from Elko of Judge status, the vote that was given them in 1924 by President Coolidge. And the one thing that Cooke pounded upon and was prepared for, unfortunately, never went to our supreme court or any higher court because of the final resolving of the election contest itself, was that Herman Cooke contended from the start that the Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot has never been completely or properly finalized as a federal reservation. He likewise attacked the validity of the Walker River Indian Reservation as bein' finalized or legalized, which is somewhat, should we say *ironical*, that today the Indians are contending out at Schurz that the right-of-way agreement with the Southern Pacific Company, although assumed to be complete back in 1872 or '73, was never properly or completely finalized and therefore the railroad is trespassing on their property. If H. R. Cooke were alive and handling their case, I'm sure he would say to the Indians, "You cannot trespass on a reservation until you prove you have a reservation." It might be de facto, if not de jure, as the lawyers like to say; it might be a reservation in fact, if not legally. So that's one twist that's liable to be raised again, when they finally get into this question of reservation boundaries, who has the right to do what or which.

Back to the Naval Depot issue, the state of Nevada took recognition of the arguments presented by H. R. Cooke late in 1933; and the very next session in 1935, they did pass a law deeding but not ceding the area that's known as the Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot Reservation. So the Navy had occupied the land for quite some time until they more or less removed the cloud from the title, as it were, and [shuffling papers] I just want to read—those few words sometimes come

back to haunt (or come back to save the safe from bein' broken into); I grabbed this old '35 statute book just to show, and this issue has come up again—I'll touch upon them:

The State of Nevada except as here in after reserved and provided, hereby cedes jurisdiction to the United States upon and over the land within the premises of that certain area situated near Hawthorne, Nevada, in Mineral County commonly known as the USN Ammunition Depot, comprising all of that certain area now occupied by the federal government in connection with said plant or to be hereinafter acquired or annexed thereto or to be used in connection therewith including all the buildings. It is hereby reserved and provided by the State of Nevada that any' private property upon said lands or premises shall be subject to taxation by the state or any subdivision thereof having the right to levy and collect such taxes. But any property upon or within such premises which belongs to the government of the United States shall be free. (And here comes the kicker.) The State of Nevada reserves the right to serve or cause to be served by any of its proper officers any criminal or civil process upon such land or within such premises for any cause there or elsewhere in the state arising, for such cause comes properly under the jurisdiction* of the laws of this state and any subdivision thereof.

What that means, is that Hawthorne, Nevada, I mean the Hawthorne Naval

**Stats. of Nevada*, 1935.

Ammunition Depot reservation, is one of the few federal areas in which both the state and the federal government have concurrent jurisdiction. So those old-timers in '35 were pretty smart at that, in not giving up everything.

But I stray from the issue of those county commissioners, I'm off, but somehow or other I wanted to work in at some point that contest between McKinnon and Summerfield. Incidentally, I saw T. O. McKinnon last weekend. He's one of the two last survivors of those old hectic early thirties who served on board of commissioners in Mineral County, the other bein' Guy McInnis, who is just about now or will be this summer ninety-four years of age living with his son John Roderick McInnis in North Las Vegas, who is still employed by the highway department, who went to work under Fred Balzar's patronage, you might say. An' we had quite a session in Lovelock this last weekend talking over those old cases, those ouster suits they had and the amusing side of it.

I could tell a lot of little stories, but they're really, I don't believe, that important, but we had the '34 election for county officials. We had any number of threatened ouster suits, one against the other. We were in the middle of it over that issue of protesting payment of claims of the *Hawthorne News*, because two county commissioners were stockholders in the *Hawthorne News*, and this went on back and forth. And, I guess for the want of somethin' better to do and not bein' able to afford to go out of town, why we stayed in town and had some pretty good "Hatfield-McCoy" feuds going on for a long time. [Laughter] Nothin' really too serious.

Johnny Miller became more or less the old patriarch, having held on to his senate seat in '32, another tough race in '36 and reelected in '40. Let me go back here, these officers—oh,

Old Pink Whiskers, J. J. Connelly, came back in the picture.

A woman, Helen Haeger, was elected in '30, pretty much with the support of those who were supporting Wood, Buckingham, and the successful commissioners. But she soon split and was feuding with the district attorney, Wood. That developed into a bitter battle 'cause in '34 the lines were really drawn this time on those county officers' races. Buckingham was successful in retaining his seat, or his office of clerk-treasurer. Helen Haeger who had been elected as a Republican, and changed to Democrat and ran as an Independent, was defeated by a Democrat, a man. Wood survived his contest, and J. J. Connelly was not into it at that time. The new man elected to replace Mrs. Haeger as auditor-recorder immediately hired the former auditor-recorder, John Connelly, as his deputy; it was a part-time job in those days. Four years later Connelly returned to office by defeating that man [laughing] who had hired him, and he stayed until he died.

Wood survived the '34 election, but before, his term was just about up in '38, seekin' office again, he encountered an ouster suit in which he was removed from office by the district court. Buckingham had had some difficulty with the state auditors about that time, and I do not have the facts in front of me and I hesitate to go into it without just a brief deal, which I'll do in the next tape. I don't want to go off half-cocked on that. Wood was defeated in '38; Buck survived, was reelected for another term. Connelly was back in as auditor-recorder and Martin Evanson had replaced Wood as district attorney.

The commissioners as usual, were still playin' musical chairs. McKinnon had survived another race, he was elected in '32, he was elected in '36, he was a holdover. Summerfield had since died, and there

were some new faces coming on the scene. Pledge, the man who lost to Boerlin for sheriff, was successful in going on the board of commissioners. That was the first year, I believe, that Farrell Seevers, who was later to become an assemblyman and state senator, was elected that first time.

I missed one point in that '34 race. When Haeger was defeated by Neil McGee, and Wood and Buckingham survived, Loyd Wilson, a Republican, running as an Independent, did defeat Henry Boerlin, who was one of the pioneer political families. That was really Boerlin's first, if not only, major setback, in '34. Two years later he was back on the county commissioners. [Laughing] So it was more or less musical chairs with the county commissioners in those days.

Right up to that point, as I say, we talked about some of Buck's difficulties, we already have Wood removed from office, and really, it involved more his position as public administrator than it did district attorney. So some years later we separated the office of district attorney and public administrator, which I've always contended is a bad marriage. The district attorney is supposed to more or less ride herd on the public administrator; it's pretty hard to wear both of those hats, no matter what fine attorney or fine administrator, I tell you, it's hard to wear both hats.

We went back to fighting at the county level, among the county officers. And it was in April of that year of '37, says, the headline reads, "Investigation District Attorney's Office Proposed Following Threat of Ouster Proceedings Against Commissioners. No Words Minced When Wood and Board Tangle Over Duty."

Acting on a motion presented
by Chairman Henry Boerlin, the

board of commissioners of Mineral County yesterday, unanimously adopted a minute order establishing in the new county budget a special tax of two and one-half cents to raise approximately one-thousand dollars for the purpose of employing an expert to investigate the books and affairs of the office of the Mineral County district attorney. This surprise action was taken following an exciting session Monday when the board members were presented by District Attorney Fred L. Wood with a written suggestion that they adopt one of three plans outlined by him in order to clarify a situation arising allegedly from mismanagement on the part of the board. Wood's suggestions were: 1) that the commissioners voluntarily resign from office, 2) that they continue as in the past and face ouster proceedings, 3) that they adopt a policy of retrenchment and proceed upon a new basis with the district attorney scrutinizing all claims for determination of legal status before final passage. The third major move came yesterday morning prior to the action of the board in proposing the investigation of the district attorney's office. This was a formal notification by the district attorney to the county auditor to issue no warrants for claims against the county auditor to issue no warrants for claims against the county until such time as an endorsement to proceed could be received from the attorney general of the state.

And that was the opening salvo in the battle that led to the ousting of Fred Wood from the office of district attorney. That feud

was off and on again throughout the summer months between the county commissioners and the district attorney, peaked early in 1938, when said,

By virtue of three resolutions passed at the monthly session of the board held Monday, the Mineral County commissioners ordered the bond of Fred L. Wood for the office of district attorney, next official public administrator of this county, increased in the sum of ten thousand dollars, and engaged N. E. Conklin, Mina attorney, to serve as legal advisor to the board, a duty ordinarily performed by the district attorney. The board gave as its reasons for the above action, developments resulting from the special audit of all departments of the county conducted recently by the state auditor and by C. F. DeArmand, certified public accountant from Elko, who was employed by the board of commissioners as a special auditor.

And so on, I'm going to not read all of that, as I say, you do have it in the files. The following week—,

The major development in the current squabble among Mineral County officers since this newspaper's- last issue published Saturday, was the appointment yesterday of N. E. Conklin, Mina attorney, as a special deputy attorney general to initiate and prosecute criminal actions or other suits that may result from the recent special audit of the various departments of the county. Appointment of Conklin was made by Attorney General Gray

Mashburn acting upon a resolution of request adopted by the Mineral County commissioners at a special meeting last Friday.

And later in the same month of February, "Commissioners Declare Office of Mineral County District Attorney Vacant Today. Failure to Post Bond Increase is Reason Given." And I'll not read the whole thing, but there is a step again, to put Wood out of the office.

"Conklin Files Criminal Charge Against Fred L. Wood in Local District Court. Three Counts in Complaint." Yesterday a complaint was filed in the district court in Hawthorne charging Fred L. Wood with the crime of failing to transmit to the Mineral County treasurer, \$273.41 allegedly collected by Wood as district attorney from the Tonopah and Goldfield Railroad Company in October, 1933 as payment on a compromise of taxes owed by the company to the county. The first of three counts in the complaint charges that Wood embezzled and converted the money to his own private use. N. E. Conklin, special deputy attorney general, was the complainant in the action.

And as an interceding note there, bulletin type; "Late Tuesday afternoon Judge William D. Hatton issued an alternative writ of mandamus directed to the county auditor ordering him to pay Fred L. Wood's salary for the month of February or to show cause why he should not pay the same." And, "A. J. Maestretti of Reno filed the mandamus action on behalf of Wood." Then on March sixteenth; "Wood held to answer criminal charge

following preliminary hearing yesterday. Bond in the sum of \$500 is posted.” And, “Wood declines to relinquish possession of DA office. Court action is anticipated. Commissioners expected to seek order from Supreme Court.”

On the following week the only news on the subject was that writ of mandate they were seekin’ so Wood could get paid. They had stopped payin’ him. Then in April: “The Ouster Action Filed Against Fred L. Wood. Removal of District Attorney From Office is Object of Suit. Wood Obtains Salary. April Eighth Date Set for Arraignment in Criminal Proceedings.” And apparently it was continued to the eighteenth, and then continued again by Judge Hatton. Then it was set for May sixteenth. “Ouster Action Set For May Sixteenth. Judge Hawkins to Hear Proceedings Against District Attorney Wood.” And that would be Judge L Hawkins of Winnemucca. And at the time that the sixteenth rolled around, “Ouster Suit Against Wood Dismissed. Bond Increase.”

A dismissal of the ouster proceedings against District Attorney Fred L. Wood was ordered Monday afternoon by Judge L. Hawkins of Winnemucca who has been called to Hawthorne to preside on the hearing which occupied the court session. So that was the first steps the following week. The bond of the district attorney’s office was ordered increased. In a sharply worded answer to a resolution by the board of county commissioners proposing an increase in the bond of the office, District Attorney Fred L. Wood Saturday morning declared there was no justification of the demand for additional bond. Immediately

after the reading of which formal statement, the commissioners adopted a resolution demanding an additional bond in the amount of \$7,500 be posted by the district attorney. He is given ten days from date of service of a copy of the resolution to file the new bond, but at noon today County Clerk D. M. Buckingham reported he has been unable to complete service, Wood being absent from town. And then in June; Commissioners Say Office of DA is Vacant. The office of the district attorney and public administrator of Mineral County was declared vacant yesterday (that would be June 7) by the Mineral County commissioners. Reason given by the board in a resolution declaring the office vacant, were that District Attorney Fred L. Wood had failed to post an additional bond in the sum of \$7,500.

And so on. The whole story is in there. And then the next one says, “No Action on Bond Question.”

But what’s behind all this?

Oh, just this bitter personal feuding that each one could find on somethin’ else, and then in the meantime the matter pertaining to the embezzlement, which was buried under the bond argument, came to trial. And this was in the June 22, 1938 issue which says: Fred L. Wood, district attorney of Mineral County, a position he has held almost eight years past, this afternoon was found guilty of neglect of duty of office by a jury of twelve men, Nye County residents, in the district court at Tonopah. The verdict was reached after thirty minutes deliberation and no

mention was made of the first two counts of the criminal complaint which counts charged Wood with misappropriation of \$273.41, allegedly received on a tax compromise between the Tonopah and Goldfield Railroad Company several years ago and failure to turn said money over to the county treasurer. Judge James Dysart set ten o'clock tomorrow morning (which'd be June 23) as the time for passing sentence. Determination as to whether the act for which Wood was convicted constitutes a felony will be made by the court at the time of passing sentence, it was reported from Tonopah late today. Wood made no statement regarding a possible appeal, but is expected to do so when sentence is passed tomorrow. And the following week; N. B. Conklin actively assumed the office of district attorney and ex officio public administrator of Mineral County yesterday when Fred L. Wood, recently deposed from the position, surrendered possession of the office. Conklin immediately moved into the office quarters at the courthouse in Hawthorne and is now serving as district attorney-in-fact, as well as in name. Wood's removal from the office resulted from his conviction of neglect of duty in office following a trial in the district court at Tonopah a few weeks ago. He has given notice of his intention to appeal the verdict of the Nye County Court, and his appeal is expected to be acted upon by the state supreme court within the next few weeks. Fred L. Wood gave notice of his intention to appeal to the state supreme court immediately after Judge James Dysart of Elko had passed sentence in the form of a five hundred dollar fine and an order for removal from office. Notice of appeal was filed by Wood's attorney, A. P. Maestretti after Judge Dysart had denied a motion for a new trial, and Wood is at liberty under one thousand dollar bond. Final disposition of that Wood we'll pick up as we go along

because now right in July of '38, I'm into this one:

Felony Charge Filed Against Mineral County Treasurer. On complaint of Henry Boerlin charging him with committing a felony, D. M. Buckingham, clerk and treasurer of Mineral County, late yesterday afternoon was arrested and after arraignment before Justice of the Peace, H. E. Bond, was released under bond of \$2,500 posted by J. F. McLaughlin and Pete Castellani, Hawthorne businessmen. The complaint was signed by Boerlin who is chairman of the Mineral County board of commissioners and filed by District Attorney N. E. Conklin and charges Buckingham with using public money over \$50 and lists three counts all in connection with the tax compromise between this county and the Tonopah and Goldfield Railroad Company negotiated in 1933.

That's back to that same issue that was involving one and that refers to a \$410 item and so on; and I might note here, that this was the first of two or three brushes Buckingham had with them, carryin' right up into World War II. To follow the disposition of this one, "Buckingham Decision to be Given August Twenty-ninth. Action Against Buckingham Ordered Dismissed by [Justice of the Peace Guy) Eckley. Mina Justice of the Peace Declines to Hold Clerk and Treasurer to Answer Felony Charge. Conklin to File Information in District Court." If you can't win in one field, you move over to the other place. "Buckingham Charge Filed. Information Against Treasurer." This is all the same item involving \$410 pertaining to that 1933 tax

compromise with the T and C railroad. This time, "Buckingham Files Petition to Have Jury Investigate County Affairs. Asks General Investigation of All Officers His Own Included." Says that, "Arguments in Buckingham Motion Continue."

Back to the Wood deal we ran against this, but,

In unanimous procurium order issued Monday afternoon, the Supreme Court of Nevada dismissed the proceedings brought by District Attorney N. E. Conklin in an effort to restrain Fred L. Wood, former district attorney of this county, from seeking that office in the November general election. Conklin had sought to prohibit Wood from seeking office on the grounds his removal from the office several months ago was based upon conviction of a charge involving moral turpitude. The Supreme Court ruled on this order Monday that the neglect of duty verdict returned by a Nye County jury following trial of Wood in the district court at Tonopah did not involve moral turpitude.

And so the final chapter had not been written in the Wood case, so the court gave him permission to run.

Now back to the Buckingham case,

Buckingham trial to be heard in Ormsby County. Judge Hatton grants change of venue requested by prosecution after defense Demurrer is overruled. Clerk and treasurer enters not guilty plea, posts five-hundred dollar bond.

And incidentally, Clarence R. Pugh of Reno, was assisting Conklin in that prosecution, and an interesting paragraph you can tie in somewhere in your "bull bloc" and few of those it said,

Conklin and Pugh contended that a fair and impartial trial could not be had in Mineral County and that the same contention applied to Lyon, Douglas and Storey counties, for the reason Buckingham's father-in-law, state Senator John H. Miller, wields commanding influence in those counties through his close association with state Senators William Dressler of Douglas and Will Cobb of Storey and former Senator George Friedhoff in Lyon. The defense attacked this line of reasoning but Judge Hatton upheld the contention and specified the district court of Carson City as the place for transfer of the case. Date of trial will be set by Judge Guild and probably as soon as all records in the action are placed before him.

Now in the January 25, 1939 issue it shows that suit dismissed on Buckingham felony charges;

Upholding the defense motion to dismiss criminal proceedings against D. M. Buckingham, clerk and treasurer of Mineral County, District Judge Clark J. Guild on Monday entered an order of dismissal in Carson City. In a lengthy decision Judge Guild upheld Buckingham's contention that the information filed against him on complaint of the former board of commissioners of this

county did not set forth facts sufficient to constitute a public offense.

And that was the end of that one, but there'll be a couple more coming on Buck, so... Then in the following week, it says,

Board-Ordered Suit Against Clerk Is Dropped. Demand for money is dismissed following examination of audit today. Meeting in recessed session today, the board of county commissioners ordered a dismissal of the civil suit against County Clerk and Treasurer D. M. Buckingham in which he and the State Board of Examiners as his bonding agents, were made defendants in a demand for approximately sixteen-hundred dollars which the previous board of commissioners had alleged was due the county from the treasurer. The order was made today after the board had examined the report of the special audit made by J. C. Trantor in recent months and filed Monday of this week. The civil suit was filed before the end of last year by then district attorney N. E. Conklin on complaint of the former board of commissioners. The case has been pending in the local district court. Buckingham recently won a dismissal of criminal action filed several months ago against him by the former board of commissioners.

Now I might note that when we're criss-crossing between Wood and Buckingham and their problem all through that summer of 1938 and into the early part of '39, that Wood was granted the right to go on the

ballot by the state supreme court which had still not ruled on whether he was disbarred from the practice of law. In the election of November that year of '38, Wood, of course lost reelection to Martin G. Evanson, a young man raised in Tonopah (parents later moved to Hawthorne) and had been practicing law for about one year, established his practice in Hawthorne, and he was elected easily. But an interesting sidelight is that Evanson got 617 votes; Wood won 98, but running third was N. E. Conklin, the man who prosecuted Wood. He didn't receive as many votes as Wood did! And also in that same election, that Buckingham was reelected to office while all these suits were pending, defeating Albert Pick, who for many years had been an under-sheriff when Commissioner Henry Boerlin, as he was then, had served as sheriff of the county.

Just to keep up to date on what happened to the bodies, where did they go or how did they end up; of course, there's still a little more to go on the final disposal of the Wood case and then the fact that Buckingham has two more coming up here against him.

Well, in 1939, of course, legislature back in session in March, there was no immediate battle going on between or among any particular office holders, why, we were provided excitement this way, that "Forty-Five Persons Asked the Legislature to Join a Large Portion of Mineral County With Nye," and "We Delegation Accepts Petition, But Offers No Legislation On It." And it said, "Thirty-one signers were registered voters in Mina at the last election; four were property owners." And it gives the names of all those who wanted to spin off from Mineral and go over into Nye, but as it stated at the outset there that Nye delegation accepted the petition and that was the end of it. No one moved on that one.

This is October fourth, 1939:

Two criminal charges involving county business were filed here last week, one against county treasurer, D. M. Buckingham, one against Martin W. Chiatovich of Mina, former bookkeeper of the Mineral County Power System in Hawthorne. Both complaints were signed by Farrell L. Seevers of Hawthorne, a member of the board of county commissioners, and were issued out of Hawthorne justice court.

So we have that one started again, and see "Hearings Are Continued. Action Against Buckingham and Chiatovich to Be Heard Later in the Week." "Chiatovich Hearing Was Set for November 8. Date to Be Set for Clerk Trial, Preliminary Hearing." Now this one charges misappropriation against the treasurer of a hundred and fifty dollars.

One of the audits said he was over eleven dollars and sixty-six cents in his account. And the charge against Chiatovich was that "he was alleged to have obtained one thousand dollars from the county power system about three years ago with a series of transactions involving the repayment of meter or line deposit in that amount." The commissioners argued a little more over payin' an auditor. "Hearing and Case Against Martin Chiatovich to Be Resumed November 29." Now here in December of 1939, back to Wood: "Conviction of Wood Upheld. Supreme Court Sustains Verdict and Sentence of District Court." And that was the fine and removal from office.

This is January twenty-fourth of '40. Says:

Ouster proceedings against County Clerk and Treasurer P. M.

Buckingham set for January 29 in local district court will be deferred as the result of an order issued by the state supreme court during the week, granting the defense a hearing on petition for a writ of prohibition which would, if granted, prohibit the district court from proceeding with the case. February 13 is the date set by the supreme court for hearing the alternative writ of prohibition.

And this ouster is based upon that previous item of a hundred and fifty dollar misapplication, as they called it, that we referred to a few moments ago. So this is still another case. We're gonna have to catalogue these by number to try to keep up with them.

The Close Out of the Buckingham Ouster. An ouster suit filed against County Clerk and Treasurer D. M. Buckingham of Mineral County several months ago was ended in a victory for the well-known official when the state supreme court granted a permanent writ of prohibition restraining the judicial district court from proceeding further in the case. And it says that the full text will be given later. In the petition for that writ it was contended that there was not sufficient cause for action, and the proceedings were contrary to the constitutional provisions providing for the removal of public officers.

There was a reference to Martin Chiatovich in there at the same time they went after Buck once more. They were very close friends, and Chiatovich had worked in the next office to Buck at the power office.

Failing to reach a verdict after several hours of deliberation, the jury in the trial, 'The State versus Martin Chiatovich' was dismissed at noon Sunday. No official statement has been made relative to resetting the case for trial, and the defendant is continued under bond of three thousand dollars, and the court approving the same bond that was posted more than a year ago by Mike Peterson and T. R. Pledge of Hawthorne.

There was a sequel to that case because of a hung jury.

Contempt charge filed as result of recent trial here. An outgrowth of the recent trial, 'The State versus M. W. Chiatovich,' in which the jury failed to reach a verdict, is a contempt proceeding against one of the members of that jury, C. E. Noble, well-known mining man of Mina. The action was instituted Saturday morning by District Attorney Martin G. Evanson after affidavits had been signed by six other members of the jury on which Noble served, Evanson said. Appearing before District Judge William D. Hatton Saturday, Evanson obtained a citation commanding Noble to appear before the court on December 9, to answer the contempt charge, basis for which according to the citation are statements which Noble is alleged, to have made while the jury was deliberating the Chiatovich case. Also, that Noble allegedly conversed with a person other than a juror prior to the closing of the case. Noble was a visitor in Hawthorne today from his

home in Nina. He stated that he had retained an attorney to defend him in the contempt proceeding to be heard next Monday. Noble case continued until January the sixth. Hearing in the contempt proceedings against C. B. Noble, Mina, were resumed this morning in the district court in Hawthorne, January 22. When the first hearing was held. Defense Attorney Oscar Oram filed several motions with the court including a demand for a jury trial. Arguments on these motions were submitted in briefs by Oram and District Attorney Martin Evanson who is prosecuting the case. This morning when the hearing was resumed, the motion for the jury trial was denied by Judge William D. Hatton and the case proceeded with the calling of witnesses.

After long and due deliberation, apparently, why Judge Hatton finally on—March twenty-ninth issue, handed down an opinion in that contempt action against Charles Noble, the juror. Says:

Charles Noble, Sr., a well-known resident of Mina, was found guilty of contempt proceedings resulting from a trial in the district court here last November in which Noble served as a juror. Punishment was limited to a censure by the court given by District Judge William D. Hatton after his opinion had been read in court this morning. Noble, who was represented in the hearings and the proceedings held several weeks ago by the late Oscar Oram, Tonopah attorney, was present in court when

the decision was read this morning. Proceedings against Noble were instituted when other members of the jury filed affidavits alleging actions and statements upon the part of Noble constituting contempt of court.

And in the meantime while waitin' for the decision, Oscar Oram died quite suddenly, and so Noble didn't bother to pursue it any farther. He had to stand there and be censured after all the weeks of waiting. So we have everything buttoned up on our poor officials with the exception of one—Buckingham's final go-around, which comes in '43.

Well, from the outset, I naturally recall landing here late in '29, and this feud apparently had been goin' on for years in Mineral County, still a young county at the time. And you have to tie in all of those factors of the elimination of the commissioner districts, the getting rid of Wichman, as we'd say, that way the resultant giving part of the county to Lyon, but the strong Democratic leaders in those days were Henry Boerlin who is mentioned there, as Commissioner Boerlin, filing some of these actions against Buckingham.

When I came to the county, Boerlin was the sheriff of the county. He had succeeded Fred Balzar. He had been a pioneer county commissioner, and when the county seat was moved from Hawthorne to Goldfield in 1907, Boerlin was still a commissioner of Esmeralda County. He said he used to have to take almost a week to make a commissioners' meeting because he'd drive from Aurora to Hawthorne, stay one night, go the next day to Thorne [Southern Pacific Railroad Station], get on a train, and make the trip to Goldfield, the long train trip to Goldfield, using up two days. Then the commissioners' meeting would

take one full day and possibly into the night or a second, leaving Goldfield about the fourth day, would come back by train to Thorne, stay in Hawthorne for the night, and then make the wagon drive back to Aurora the next day. And he was really one of the pioneers. He and Wichman were close. The old ranch group, and there're names that start cropping up—Albert Pick who had been his under-sheriff and had run against Buckingham and the like, very mild, pleasant young fella—and well, I'm just tryin' to think of them all.

Along the road, I guess, it appeared that the Miller faction, as you'd call it, and the Boerlin faction had done quite well in 1926 when Boerlin was elected sheriff to succeed Balzar. C. C. Ward had ousted Jay H. White in the district attorney's office. And, in general they had the board of commissioners they thought going along well.

In 1930 there was that upheaval of Buckingham's return from Reno and had won the office of county clerk and treasurer a close race, possibly some thought a surprise race. The change in the county commissioner setup did not quite please the river group or the farm bloc, although at least one Democrat was on the board at the time—Guy McInnis, but very independent minded and he would go either way we thought. Wood had ousted Ward as district attorney, and it was more or less a Republican victory in '30.

The intervening feuding, as I say, would take a whole volume through there, but began to peak in '34, well, first in '33 when they repealed the commissioner districts, gave away part of the county, that opened new sores and drew new battle lines. Buckingham easily won his reelection to clerk and treasurer. Miller had a tight race in '32 for senator, always felt that the Democratic side was really out to get him. Boerlin came up short in 1934 when they backed Loyd Wilson, Republican

runnin' as an independent for sheriff, and Boerlin lost out as sheriff.

And two years later Boerlin bounced back by winning his seat on the board of commissioners and that's when the great deal of this fighting really opened up then. They had definitely chosen lines, and it wasn't all Boerlin. In fact, in those later cases you'll find the names of Seever and Evanson, and they were definitely anti-Miller and very staunch Democrat; and so the old Miller bloc or Miller gang of some kind and Buck bein' the son-in-law was one of the front runners in it. Wood had gone along pretty well with that group. And it was just one of those no let-up feuds that each time the other fella came up, opposition was out to get him. And when they didn't win it by ballot, then they went to this method, and with some justification, that they'd wait until the boys'd get careless in office and through some of these small amounts—the \$150, the \$410, and that Chiatovich thing, that was a mix-up in bookkeeping.

I never could understand that one myself. Chiatovich was absolutely innocent of any charge there. Might have been poor bookkeeping, but heavens if the man was gonna take anything over a period of three or five years, I'm sure he would take more than a thousand dollars [chuckling] cause he didn't have a dime when he left the job.

And the jury, although a hung jury, the juries in those days were pretty much of the Tom Dewey type of blue ribbon juries, which I did not like. I used to fight with Evanson and Seever considerably over that. The method of selecting the jury panel for the year or the venire, as some call it, would be to take a copy of the local newspaper of the issue that printed the list of registered voters and each commissioner would have a copy and go down the line, and number one commissioner, "Well, I want so and so." The

clerk would write that name down, number two would pick one, number three would pick one. Number one would pick one and number three'd say, "Just a minute, I don't know, I don't think he'd make a good juror." They'd debate back and forth. Well, particularly after Evanson became district attorney, sit right at their elbow and say, "Oh, I wouldn't pick him, there's a good one there, I think you're overlookin' one." Then they would get the 150 to 200 names with the district attorney sittin' right at their elbow, and it wasn't difficult to select a jury, and they were well meaning and had particularly a group of ladies, more or less community leaders, all law and order type of the first water, y'all might call 'em—we used to refer to 'em as convicts or the quitters, once we'd see members of the jury, and two or three old cronies among the men—that some of these had filed the action against Nobel. They did far worse than Noble did; I know that one particular case. And so the juries were pretty much hand-picked in those days. It was far from an impartial jury by the time they seated twelve people in the box; and I repeat, when they didn't turn out too successful at the ballot box, then they decided to go to the jury box.

Oh, some of those that I've even skipped over—ouster—Peterson was up against an ouster suit. He'd filed ousters against two or three people himself, and then someone filed an ouster suit against him, the one: "I J.-Smith Files Ouster Action Against All Commissioners." And they were gonna oust Guy McInnis one time because when they were to build the courthouse vaults they bought the cement through Burkham's garage of which he was the manager, no owner, no profit sharing or anything; but the reason they bought 'em was to put those men to work on WPA, and Burkham charged ten cents a sack less than any other supplier offered to sell it for. But still later that developed into an ouster

action against the county commissioner. So we didn't have to have a great reason or a valid reason in those days to see our county officials run into court as a complainant or as a defendant. But it was basically political and party line pretty much, and then, as I say, because of the continual ouster actions and dismissal and ouster, it developed the strong personal enmities. Some of those wounds were healed and some weren't, in the closing days before they passed from the picture.

The one man still alive of all that group would be T. O. McKinnon, the man whose name is mentioned throughout here. T. O. told me last year he was seventy-six; I guess he'd be seventy-seven this year. Colorful, Texan, he said that the day he turned twenty-one he said, "I registered Republican," and he said, "and I left Texas." [Chuckling] He did. He was a Texas Republican, and he said that it wasn't safe to be in Texas in those days and be a Republican. He has the Ford agency up in Lovelock. And he was laughin' tellin' some people during our press convention, he says, "Well, hell man, I think I still hold the record," he says, "for bein' threatened and bein' thrown out of office more than any other official around here." [Chuckling] He says, "I tell some of these young county commissioners around Pershing County, they get in a fight, and I say, man, you don't know what a fight is." Hell, you just got little skirmishes goin'. You should have been in Mineral County in the 1930s." He was kicked out as chairman and the two or three times he was on the ouster list, and it's amusing to talk to that fella now. He was quite a vigorous young guy in those days, and is now a senior citizen. That's what it was all about.

There were many people who were friends of both, we'll say, the complainant and the defendant in each case. A lot of them wondered, well, good God, not another one,

'cause here it would come. And so it was a strain on the community that way, bein' so small and everyone knowin' each other personally. And sometime, as I say, with an intermarriage or blood relationship, it was somethin' that young people had to weather.

HAWTHORNE NAVAL DEPOT HISTORY

Lake Denmark, New Jersey is a site of a large ammunition plant adjacent to the Picatinny arsenal, Picatinny being operated by Army, and Lake Denmark by the Navy. And they had a tragic explosion in July of 1926, took many lives, caused a lot of consternation within the military and congress and elsewhere. And after this plant was leveled, why, the decision—now what happens? Will the Navy rebuild? Quite obvious that they could not rebuild in the heavily populated area where they had been (New Jersey, east coast), but there was also a struggle at the time to get money for anything military or defense, not unlike 1976. And the fear of explosion and the like, not too much unlike some of our “environmental evangelists” of today, they just stop everything—“stop the world; let’s get off!” But I think more farsighted heads prevailed, both in the military and the congress, and among those being our own junior senator, Tasker L. Oddie.

And at this point, I’d like to say that I think Oddie was a great man and never did receive all the recognition that he should have for

his low-key, unpublicized, but effective work in congress. The Oddie-Colton Road Bill, as they called it, which was the beginning of our transcontinental highways right up to today, to our interstate freeway system, he could foresee that and the need of it. But back to this Lake Denmark situation.

We must be mindful that during those middle twenties, carry-over from World War I, which made “the world safe for democracy and peace from then on into eternity,” or at least for a few years, there was that strong feeling favoring disarmament, no military buildup. I remember we used to have to study it through our “current events” about the five-five-three ratio. The disarmament conference would be held in Washington, then in London, possibly somewhere else. And the five-five-three ratio was explained to us that the United States and Great Britain would now be on a par. “Britannia” would no longer “rule the waves,” but in a number of ships and other necessary weaponry, it might be termed, while Japan would be at the low end—the three ratio. And that’s how they

determined these three major powers would maintain a five-five-three ratio of strength.

And, of course, it wasn't long before they learned that Great Britain tore up blueprints, the United States actually took ships to sea, used them for target practice and sank them, and Japan somehow or other changed its mathematical system, as it was later proved in 1941, that they were not only sixty percent the strength of Great Britain and the United States.

Well, during that period of struggle or pro-disarmament era, it was difficult to get congress to appropriate to any great amount for *new* military strength; and yet, after this Lake Denmark explosion, not only the Navy, but civilians realized that something had to be done to readjust some of the backup systems of the defense of the nation, and the idea of having the Navy locate something similar to Lake Denmark on the west coast, was moved to the forefront very strongly by Tasker L. Oddie.

The thought of the best location being somewhere in the Hawthorne area was given its impetus in Tonopah, within twenty-four hours after that July, 1926 explosion, just in the usual conversation of where would be a good place to locate it. C. C. Boak, often credited with bein' the sole proponent of the Hawthorne Ammunition Depot, as my memory serves me, actually favored Sodaville, Nevada on the railroad, lots of open land, and virtually no population. The files of either the *Tonopah Times* or the *Tonopah Bonanza* show whether I'm actually correct on that, in his initial proposal.

About the same time, old James M. Fenwick, the colorful stockbroker who'd started in Goldfield and later moved to Tonopah, came up with an idea that possibly the shores of Walker Lake would be an ideal site. Here again, as I recall, Fenwick even

had the vision, or view, of storing dangerous ammunition and explosives beneath the water of Walker Lake, which in some ways the way the world is, is not a farfetched idea, and today particularly when we're dealin' in the atomic age!

Nevertheless, Oddie took it from there and pushed, and pushed hard. He was able to play a very important role in getting the appropriation of three and a half million dollars to permit the Navy to build a new ammunition depot on the west coast.

Now, admittedly, the appropriations always originate in the lower house [of congress]. Sam Arentz was working very strongly with Oddie. Key Pittman was either still tryin' to raise the price of silver, or havin' a confrontation with somebody, somewhere, and didn't seem too interested. Pittman never did play any important role in getting the depot to Hawthorne, regardless of what later historians might have written. In fact, as I show later on in our taping, he became very anti-Navy, anti-Hawthorne, but was anti-Navy insofar as this station was concerned.

Not to dwell on this too long, as I say, after the money was given, of course, by appropriation. The next job of the Navy was to select a site and they sent the admirals into the field. And they had already had their, what we term "shore stations," from San Diego to San Pedro on up to Bremerton, Washington, Mare Island and the Bay area; and quite obviously, that is not where they wanted to store ammunition and, in the event of an emergency, to load and fill bombs of various types, which is the very nature of an ammunition depot, it's far more than just stowage.

The thought of getting inland, and also in sparsely populated areas, seemed to be foremost in the mind of the Navy. And after viewin' many sites, of course, they whittled

it down to two possible sites: Hawthorne, Nevada and Secret Valley, California, an area then represented by Congressman Harry Englebright. The question of which one would be better, naturally, put the Navy in somewhat of a bind because now they're dealin' with the large, growing state of California and its political influence in congress of which the military always must be cognizant, or they'll be put out of business as we will see again in 1976. And as Tasker Oddie told me the story himself and chuckled about it (and I thought it was great; I've told it many times 'cause I was proud of the old man for his savvy), in proving that you do not have to have all the horses to win a race back in Washington, and you do not have to be bashful about a little logrolling, or back-scratching.

The story as Oddie told me: that it happened that he was just on the verge of losing it. And he went to his close friend Senator [Frederick] Hale of Maine, who was chairman of what was then called the Naval Affairs Committee. And Oddie was one of the ranking members on that committee. Oddie and Hale came up with an adverse report on the proposed construction of a bridge across the San Francisco Bay and the Golden Gate, because the presence of those bridges might interfere with or impair the movement of the fleet in time of emergency. Well, as again I say (and I got this directly from Tasker Oddie), no matter how much the Navy might deny it, or some other politician might deny it, as Oddie put it, "all hell broke loose." Hiram Johnson and Samuel Shortridge, who were senators of far more than average stature in those days, immediately went after Oddie and Hale and demanded to know what they were coming up with and why they were doin' this to them. And Oddie says in a discreet manner, he explained to them that there'd probably be less fear if they knew that they had a tremendous

backup for the fleet in the form of a new, well-established ammunition depot well behind the Sierra Nevada mountains, and could give strength to the Navy and all branches of service in time of war. [Chuckling] With that, that when the Navy received the go-ahead from Hiram Johnson and Samuel Shortridge and some of the more influential Bay area congressmen, that the Navy then gave its blessing, and after deep research and study, determined that Hawthorne would be the site.

I got into the Lake Denmark story there and Tonopah in 1926; now more about the ammunition depot, naturally, should come now after movin' to Hawthorne. But how little any of us there in Tonopah realized what an effect it would have on our future lives (Jim Fenwick, myself, a number of others), because Tonopah was still doin' pretty well in '26; Hawthorne was a little village of a hundred and fifteen. They could have that ammunition depot, whatever it was; no one understood what one would look like, or what it would do after it was open.

That same eventful year of '26, we must remember, Oddie was up for reelection. And, as usual, he had to face primary opposition as well as winning in the general. And for some reason I'll never know, we did not receive the support from Reno (I say *we*—I mean those in Tonopah at the time) to push as hard as Tonopah did to get this ammunition depot in Hawthorne. Had the feeling that, oh, Ed Walker, and others of the Chamber of Commerce were just about neutral if not leaning a little bit toward that Secret Valley, California site (which in the same general area later did obtain an Army ammunition depot called Herlong, an' bein' much closer to Reno than Hawthorne would be). I think they were thinking in terms the name implies—Chamber of Commerce. They probably figured the commerce of Reno would benefit

more from a nearby station, regardless of state lines. And so the few of us from southern Nevada—of course I say, the few of *us*; I wasn't old enough to vote (a few years away from it), but everyone praising Oddie down there, there were just not that many votes.

And this was about the time that the usual split in the Republican party that Oddie had faced from 1910 on, took a new twist. Now the erstwhile Bull Moosers got into the act, because it seems that Oddie and George Springmeyer had clashed. Springmeyer was either U.S. attorney or an assistant U.S. attorney. The big issue came over a letter or a verbal appeal that Oddie had made to go easy on closing up the bootleg establishments in Tonopah. They were small, comparable to a "mom and pop" store of today, and for a lot of the old fellows, as Oddie pointed out, it was the only place maybe, they had to stay warm at night before they went home and crawled in the cabin bed and the like.

Well, in that bitter campaign of '26, it was charged that Oddie was actually usin' undue influence to favor violation of the Prohibition act. I repeat, in '26 I was only fifteen during that bitter fight, but I'd hear about it in many discussions in the newspaper office, and that's when Bill Booth insisted on scribbling out an editorial which Matt Farrell had to clean up.

And now as we move into 1928, it was on July twenty-fourth of 1928 that the Navy finally came in to officially dedicate land for their ammunition depot. And that was in July, almost two years to the day from the Lake Denmark explosion, and I think the Lake Denmark was July 10, 1926. I recall that because that's Pioneer Day back in Utah, and sort of a pioneer day in Hawthorne.

Quite a crowd drove from Tonopah. In fact, Jack Douglass and myself bummed a ride with Walter Bowler (the justice of the peace, an office he held for many years) and

Matt Farrell, the editor of the *Bonanza*. And we came to Hawthorne to spend the day, and we had a great time. Saw some new girls, smiled at them and they giggled, runnin' around waitin' for the big show to start, 'n got here very early in the morning. An' the headquarters for the Tonopah group was an old two-story frame hotel located on the lot where you're sittin' right now. This very lot here where the Independent office is. And it was one time called the Hawthorne Hotel (there is another one here now called that). They had a large yard in the back of it—huge trees, something we didn't have in Tonopah—and we'd kind of hang out. They had, I think, a few soft drinks and root beer, ginger ale or something—this is before 7-up came on the scene—but they had plenty of beer in tubs, and some liquor upstairs. In other words, the Volstead Act was suspended that day in Hawthorne, I can assure you that.

The morning went on, we looked over Hawthorne and finally some decided to go to the lake and take a swim. They all went down to Walker Lake and had a fine swim, all the time someone keepin' their eye on the road coming around the lake to make sure that the admirals hadn't arrived yet—that the party hadn't started.

Well, it was about two o'clock in the afternoon before they came. It was Admiral [William D.] Beahy, who was later Roosevelt's aide, and Admiral Gregory, I believe, were the two that came that day with representatives of the Reno Chamber of Commerce. Oh, now that Hawthorne had it, Reno was taking *all* the credit for it. Ed Walker would tell you how he met this influential person and that one, and how they flew the people over the proposed Secret Valley site, and made certain they took them right after a heavy rainfall, so that they could see most of their land area underwater,

and some ducks allegedly swimming in the lake. This was the story that they told us later.

But it was about two in the afternoon, and you must realize that after leaving Carson City—from Reno to Carson City—pretty rough roads all the way through Douglas County. Came by way of Gardnerville and Minden, then down through Smith Valley into Yerington—virtually nothing in Yerington—around the lake (and around the lake damn rough), but they did get here around two in the afternoon. A little speech making, and review of history, and exchange of compliments and all that stuff over on the courthouse steps—the old courthouse building, that sits behind us—and then moved down from town to dedicate the new 211-square-mile ammunition depot site.

Well, whether it had been the hot day, the long dusty drive, or the fact that, as I say, the Volstead Act was suspended that day; they moved to the north end of what is now our main street—but then was somewhat desert—and when they figured they had gone far enough, they stopped and they had someone tryin' to blow a bugle. Fred Eggleston, who then had the *Western Nevada Miner* in Mina, was here that day, all in their wrap leggings and leftover World War I uniforms; American Legion was somewhat in the forefront that day. Fred beat the drums; they put up a temporary pole, and they raised the American flag, and everybody cheered and saluted. The only slipup—the site where they put the pole and raised the flag to dedicate the Naval Ammunition Depot was then, and still is, within the one square mile that they left for the town of Hawthorne! [Laughter] And I do have pictures to prove that. We've always laughed (there's a little motel on the site now, down above the Buick agency), but they didn't even get on their own property [chuckles] when they dedicated the place—which had

no force or effect, as you understand—it was just one of those amusing incidents. Oh, they had a dance that night, an open-air platform dance. It was quite a celebration in Hawthorne that day!

DEPOT CONSTRUCTION

The real start of the depot could be pinpointed on that day in July of 1928, because accompanying the two admirals was one other Naval officer, a Lieutenant Commander Carl H. Cotter, CEC (the old Civil Engineering Corps, as they called them then), came to Hawthorne with them and stayed, and started building a staff to supervise the actual construction. I don't know where Commander Cotter lived or stayed that night, but with no houses in Hawthorne, one of the first things he did was to build a house himself. I do believe he rented one down on the main street of the town, a little residence, until he could complete the construction of a home. It's a rather odd-shaped, two-story house and still here in Hawthorne just directly east of the present-day post office. But it was an indication to me of the type of man that Commander Cotter was in getting things moving; by building a house instead of crying (they didn't have trailers in those days). He didn't expect the Navy to build one for him, and he built the home, lived in it, and sold it when he left Hawthorne about two years later. And I thought that rather interesting.

His next step was to find an office, a headquarters. And having no cruisers or destroyers on Walker Lake to rely upon, he made arrangements with the county commissioners of Mineral County, and they used the jury room in the old courthouse, set up their drafting tables (old wooden desks) and that's where the work was done. There was an occasion or two when they had a trial

that the Naval staff would have to move out and go downstairs and smoke or visit with the other officers by the time the case went to the jury—which was only one or two during that eighteen-month period he was in there.

There was an interesting thing, that they were to build a corrugated iron garage building somewhere in the town of Hawthorne. The negotiations seemed to move along well; the county provided the land, but continual change orders, delays in Washington, prevented that one Navy building from bein' built in Hawthorne. It was a minor matter, but just to show, even in those days they had difficulty reaching a decision on some "major crisis"—the one little garage building. [Chuckling] It later was built on the flat inside the area which became the depot.

The first actual contract that I can find record of was before I came to Hawthorne, just about a year before, was for the construction of seven and a half miles of railroad, and Shuler and McDonald of Oakland, California were awarded the contract on a bid of \$120,700. Incidentally, that bid award was made on December the twenty-sixth of 1928, which is rather an interesting sidelight, because they did not have long holidays in those days. They went back to work the day after Christmas and got moving with it.

The next contract of any consequence was March twentieth of 1929 when Dodge Construction of Fallon was awarded a contract to build twenty-one miles of road from the depot for \$85,000. Realizing today that some sections of the freeway run better than a million dollars a mile in many other areas, I think it was rather remarkable—not the size, but the smallness of the contract amount. And the—of course, the first major contract to get buildings, and all appurtenances started, was awarded in June of 1926 to Mittry Brothers of Los Angeles, California and the bid was

\$1,092,000, and that included buildings of various types. I don't have the exact figure, but it was something like 126 or 121 separate buildings involved there, 84 of which would be the igloo magazines—those were the first igloo magazines. But that included all the 22 brick homes inside the industrial area, from the captain's quarters down Kings Row into the civilian area, the little garages behind them. They're still there, but hardly large enough. They were a two-car garage at the time; they'd probably take one car by today's standards. But that was the beginning of the depot.

Now in some historical references—I've seen it in state publications; I've seen it in the Naval depot's own little brochure they put out—someone didn't get the cart before the horse, but they got the horse and the cart alongside of each other. They will tell about the first part of the construction with the ammunition plant, as some might describe it, and that would be the ordnance area several miles east of Highway 95, the general area of Thorne Railroad Station. And they also list 17 buildings involved; and as I just explained there were more than a hundred buildings involved in that first contract. I believe the confusion arises because Mittry did construct those major buildings in the industrial area—the 22 residential quarters and 17 major concrete buildings ranging from the administration building to the hospital or dispensary to the Marine barracks, and they still stand. That was on the west side of Highway 95. Out east several miles, the Mittry firm constructed the 84 original igloos, plus a number of auxiliary buildings. So the first contract embraced both the industrial site, as we call it, and the ordnance; but it was not the complete ordnance area as I can show later by additional contracts.

And, I've dug this out from somewhere; on October 30, 1929 the headquarters

office for the local Naval staff was moved from the courthouse in Hawthorne to the long, elongated frame building that had been constructed within the industrial area of the ammunition depot as a temporary structure that served then as the office for all the inspectors, draftsmen, and engineers and the like. But from December of '28 until October of '29 the entire staff was quartered, as I said before, in that little jury room up in the courthouse.

The Mittry contract, the first major one, was nearly completed within about fifteen months because in September of 1930 the depot was commissioned. And I can't pinpoint the date, but could fill that in at any time, because there was a little confusion on that commissioning. They commissioned the same day that Governor Balzar and Congressman Arentz *couldn't* make it. They did make it a week later, and that was when the famous incident occurred between Governor Balzar and the first commanding officer.

Now, although formally commissioned, the depot was far from being completed. Construction was still going on within the industrial area and out in the ordnance area. The Mittry contract was considered completed in October of 1930, yet it was not until December of 1930 that the contract was let for the construction of what was known as the mine filling plant, later years called the "bomb line." The huge concrete structures out in the ordnance area where all the explosives were handled and processed.

There again on that holiday issue, I notice the Dinsmore contract was awarded on December thirty-first. They were still workin' the day before New Year's! Probably had major projects going up until quitting time. That—which was, the second largest contract in the process of building the depot—that was really not completed until into '32, 'cause

I've noticed in their logs and records that the first test of the plant was made on April thirtieth of 1932. So, here the depot had been commissioned since '30, but was not really ready to operate as an ammunition depot. And, incidentally, the first test was made on a Saturday. There was no five-day week in those days. These little asides with the changing times has always been interestin' to me. It seems so many important things happening today are before, or the day after a holiday, or on a Saturday.

There were other major contracts—the construction of a dam on Cat Creek, that was about a one-hundred-thousand-dollar job. Incidentally, I believe that Dinsmore contract was approximately \$235,000.. So by the time the last contractor had left the depot in 1932, the total investment, expense of building, constructing was a little in excess of three million dollars because the original appropriation and authorization for the construction of an ammunition depot in Hawthorne had been set at \$5,500,000. And it was well over four hundred thousand dollars unexpended, which is different in this day and age with overruns, and no one turns anything back to the government. However, that \$435,000 having been authorized, once appropriated and then reverts, was more or less, in the deep-freeze or on ice. It was some years later that Congressman Jim Scrugham and Senator Pat McCarran discovered it was sittin' there and took just a simple directive to get it moving, and it was eventually expended at Hawthorne under a contract in 1939, more than ten years after the first contract had been awarded. And that was really the beginning of the depot.

Now, during this year of '28 and '29, there had been not too much activity in Hawthorne, other than building some roads, railroad, surveying, and in June of '29, the first contract

was let. I came to Hawthorne for two weeks during that summer to relieve Jim Fenwick who had gone on vacation, met a number of contractors. And the day they flew in to “walk the job,” as they called it—competing contractors—they came in a tri-motor Fokker airplane; it was owned by one of the oil companies in southern California. Today that would give Jack Anderson enough material for three or four columns, and some of our scandal-minded congressmen reason to have a subcommittee come out and investigate. All the oil company was doing was tryin’ to butter up all the contractors. Whoever was successful, they wanted to sell ‘em, and they were one of the few companies that owned an airplane.

The tri-motor airplane landed just about exactly where our football field is located today in Hawthorne [chuckling], now surrounded by school buildings on one side and some residences on the other. We had, more or less, of a “flash” in the paper when the *Hawthorne News* came out on that Wednesday. We had the story, one brief paragraph, that a \$1,092,000 contract had been awarded to the Mittry Brothers of Los Angeles to build the first phase of this vast three-and-a-half-million-dollar ammunition plant. So that was the story, the Mittry Brothers were going big guns—this is at the ammunition depot.

I believe they had almost as many subcontractors as they had people workin’ for them there at one time. Everything was subcontracted out. The contractors were more or less brokers in those days; they just—oh, not any of the painting—but they’d call in some of the cabinet workers or something maybe to fit the doorknobs; you had to subcontract for that. Then the stream line man, the major contractor, then he would call in a subcontractor specializing in plumbing, and then one specializing in steam fitting, and

then even another one to do the excavating for him. It was quite a varied setup on the entire job at the depot, but that’s just one more construction job.

It took about one year from the time the Mittry Brothers showed up in August of ’29 to September of ’30 to construct a total of 133 separate buildings. Now some of those are only small garages that a modern-day car wouldn’t fit in! Nevertheless, as the job proceeded, around 84 of the buildings were magazines, and there were 2 detonator buildings out in the ordnance area, there were the main administration buildings, those big concrete buildings there today; there were 22 residences in that; and then auxiliary buildings like the stables, or the Marine barracks and all. And the general impression many people have—I say the general impression, it’s been told to them in writing—that the ordnance area of the depot was constructed first, and then came the industrial area, as we call it, over here right next to the highway. That is not correct. *Part* of the ordnance area (the 84 magazines and the detonator buildings) were constructed at the same time and under the same contract as all the administration buildings, utility service buildings, Marine barracks and quarters were. That was all at onetime.

And I’ve had to correct the state highway magazine and others. In fact, I had to correct the Naval Ammunition Depot’s own little pamphlet they put out. They had it twisted, too. Someone started it in error, and then they just perpetuate it, and just about two weeks ago I suggested to the Navy, next time they print one of their brochures that they get their dates and their locations correct [chuckling].

That was the basic contract. I’m just tellin’ you this so that if somewhere along the road people want to know how it was built. The mine filling plant was another major contract,

an' that was S. C. Dinsmore of Salt Lake City, Utah. That was not completed until 1932, even though the depot was commissioned in 1930. The Cat Creek Dam contract was let *after* the depot had been commissioned. So from a period of '29 to '32 is the time that it took to build the depot, not the one year that many people believe it was.

Then comes the famous day in September of 1930; I think it was the fifteenth (I could look it up for you if you ever want the exact date), when they formally commissioned the depot. We were to have all the bigwigs and government officials down here. None of 'em could make it, but they did come one week or two weeks later and they had a rerun on the ceremony. And Oddie couldn't make it out from Washington. Sam Arentz did. Fred Balzar, Morley Griswold came from Carson City. And here was the joining of the hands of the great United States Navy and the state of Nevada.

But the joining of hands was very brief and almost ended in some doubling up of fists at the end of the simple ceremony. I have a picture of that—of the Naval officers and what I call the “gravy boat” hats, the old elongated ones with the gold braid, and the tassels, and wearing side arms, as they call 'em, scabbard and blade and all, and tripping over them. Some of them hadn't had one on since the [laughter] day they'd been commissioned. And it was quite amusing.

At the close of the ceremony Fred Balzar, then our governor, said to Commander [Richard F.] Bernard (“Jumbo” Bernard, as they called him) he used the corny expression: “Well, you know what the governor of North Carolina said to the governor of South Carolina? He says, ‘I've got some pretty good stuff over there in my car.’

Well, Bernard bristled and followed him over and said in effect, “Governor, as

you understand, you're on a federal Naval reservation. We do observe and respect the Prohibition laws of the land, and there'll be no liquor permitted on this station.” He took the bottle, and he broke it on a rock in front of the administration building.

Well, Balzar, with his usual western language as he'd learned when he was sheriff here in Hawthorne, proceeded to tell his new, but briefly met friend, what he thought of the Navy that would send anybody out to the state of Nevada who talked and acted the way he did and without proper training in confiscation of property, without due process, and, in effect, departed by tellin' him he could go to hell, and he'd never set foot on the station again. Fred Balzar never would go through the gates of the depot again as long as Bernard was the commanding officer. Bernard was what we used to term in those days, a reformed drunkard. It wasn't so much it was Prohibition days or a federal reservation, but because he had to give it up, I guess he wanted everybody else to. We learned this as he stayed here for a couple of years, the general nature of the fellow.

Balzar would come to Hawthorne and visit his mother here, which he did frequently, and many of his old friends, stay a day or two, stay overnight at least, visit uptown. Certain functions were held at the depot during the two-year tenure of Commander Bernard, but Balzar never again would enter the station, in fact, not until after Bernard had been retired (which he was, right at this station), and succeeded by a Commander [H. S.] Babbitt who later became Captain Babbitt and for whom the Babbitt housing is now named.

Babbitt made one or two courtesy calls to Carson City and pleading with the governor to kiss and make up, and assure him if he came he'd like to have him for lunch and he'd like to offer him a drink [chuckling]. Captain

Babbitt told me that himself, "Might have been sticking my neck out a little, because Prohibition had not been repealed." Babbitt came in late '32, and Balzar did relent and he did get to make a few visits to the depot before he died at his early age.

But that was where we got started off [laughter] with the Navy and the state and the town of Hawthorne. It was one of the many amusing incidents, and then again a little inkling of things to come; what about conflict, and at times there'd be a little dispute over someone on the Naval reservation; particularly going from the town of Hawthorne to get to Thorne, which is our railroad, we had to cross the Naval depot. And depending upon the Marine on guard, you didn't know whether you could drive from Hawthorne to Thorne and admire the scenery, or whether you were going to get stopped and questioned, turned back. So that had to be resolved rather rapidly.

Then it was all pretty well in general agreement, but old Johnny Miller discovered (Johnny was our state senator as you know at the time; he had tried to be governor four years before Balzar did and wasn't able to take Scrugham), but as this thing began to jell and became more apparent that someone had to have authority in the gray areas, the legal lights got with it at the federal and state level. And in order to give the Navy a title to the property where they had built this vast ammunition depot that they had assumed that all was in order, acting upon advice both from Washington and Carson City, in 1935 the state legislature approved a very brief bill offered by the Committee on Federal Relations which simply states:

The state of Nevada, except as hereinafter reserved and provided, hereby cedes jurisdiction to the

United States upon and over the land and within the premises of that certain area situated near Hawthorne, Nevada in Mineral County, commonly known as the U.S.N. Ammunition Depot comprising all of that certain area now occupied by the federal government in connection with said plan or to be hereafter acquired or annexed thereto, or to be used in connection therewith, including all the buildings and improvements thereon. It is hereby reserved and provided by the state of Nevada that any private property upon said lands or premises shall be subject to taxation by the state, or any subdivision thereof having the right to levy and collect such taxes, but any property upon or within such premises which belongs to the government of the United States shall be free of taxation by the state, by the county of Mineral or any of its subdivisions.

And here's one of the key kickers:

The state of Nevada reserves the right to serve or cause to be served by any of its proper officers, any criminal or civil process upon such land or within such premises for any cause thereof elsewhere in the state arising, for such cause comes properly under the jurisdiction of the laws of this state or any subdivision thereof.

And to this day, our U.S. attorneys and assistants, all fine fellows and all, in Reno, once they catch that brief paragraph, and we have some nuisance case out here—whether it's an automobile crack-up, little shooting incident as we had recently and all—the U.S. attorney's

office backs off every time and says, "Well, you have concurrent jurisdiction, let Mineral County handle it." (It's just unfortunate that we do not have the same provision in relation to our Indian reservations.) So, we have concurrent jurisdiction, and I think we can have dual citizenship, détente or something, on these federal reservations.

Commissioned in '30 didn't mean a damn thing; they were still building it and all, and had a half-dozen Naval officers around, and about forty-eight Marines in here tryin' to patrol the vast area. And they did, fairly well, on horseback; so all the songs and jokes we'd heard about "Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines" had to be put on the shelf when Hawthorne NAD was considered because one of the first stations where they actually had to establish a horse Marine patrol. And little happened from the first commission of '30, completion in '32, until 1935, as far as real activity at the depot is concerned.

In 1935, a number of ordnance men were called in. They were called there in the Naval Reserve, formerly enlisted men who'd served twenty years, practically all of them chiefs—chief petty officers—were brought in to rework a large number of the old World War I mines that were stored here and which were deteriorating so badly that the only danger they constituted was to the people workin' around them or the U.S. Navy, not any foreign enemy. And that group remained there for about a year and a half. That special project, it was quite an uplift to the community, especially when you realize we were still fightin' our way out of the Depression. Then again, when the project was completed, the plant shut down and did not reopen, of course, until the war broke out in Europe, then they started again. And from there throughout World War II, and even into Korea, the depot expanded to where today

there are more than two thousand buildings located within the confines of the depot and constitute an part of the depot, in terms of the ammunition depot.

If I may backtrack on the depot period now. In 1928, I mentioned about two admirals coming in, Gregory and Leahy. For some strange reason—this is my own assumption; I think it was the era of the Volstead Act or something—that between 1928 and 1932 Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot was visited by more admirals than probably most Naval installations around the country, and certainly by as many or more than we had for the next ten or twenty years, and they usually came in pairs. And some usually came on Saturday evening drivin' from Reno, stay till Monday or Tuesday. They seemed to like it here. Once here, we couldn't get rid of them. And I think the whole thing was, I think, it was just kind of a Shangri-la, 'cause there was nothing to inspect, things were just under construction [chuckling]; but they seemed to love it. They'd make a short speech and put out a press release and stay two or three days, go out to the lake; they seemed to have a great time around here, the admirals did. And then, of course, even during the long period of the thirties—mid-thirties—and that period that I just mentioned when it was operating, you would think then we might have some high brass coming in to visit us. But nationwide the Prohibition act had been repealed, and there's just somewhere in there, there's a relationship between the presence or absence of admirals [laughter] and the law of the land at the moment!

Today Hawthorne stands ready to get in gear and do its work if there's another hassle in which we get directly involved (we are indirectly involved in them now, no use kiddin' ourselves about that). And they all scream about Angola, but what about the

ammunition that's gone from here to the Arab countries and Israel? No one seems to publicize that or worry about it.

The thing is that, other than that nominal production, they'd be ready to go, but the people who work with the equipment—someone has to do this kind of work—would just love to replace some segments of equipment that date back to World War I, that were brought here in 1930 and installed as surplus from World War I. We do operate on a double standard in the field of defense, military and the like. I'm gettin' into a little editorializing or something here, but some of this at some time or another should be brought out. We just don't have a good program.

Now I've given you that quick history of the depot through the three-war period, more from the physical plant, nature of the operation. I will come back to it from time to time about some amusing incident, but now we're in the transition period of bein' turned over to the Army under a "single service management concept," as it is called. The Army, and the Army alone, will handle all munitions, conventional ammunition production for all branches of the service in the future. This transition is expected to take three years—1979 they believe, before the Army is fully in command.

It's no great problem, other than the time factor, that anyone can see. Naturally the Navy is a little sentimental about giving up Hawthorne, Nevada; McAllister, Oklahoma; and a good part of Crane, Indiana, which they have built and developed through the years. And it's just as though the Navy suddenly acquired the Presidio from the Army in San Francisco. It's your old homestead, so to speak, and you hate to give it up, although the services (Air Force and Marine Corps along with the Army and Navy) are working very cooperatively with each other and

with the understanding; and I think the transition will come smoothly other than the usual bureaucratic gobbledygook. And that'll throw you, whether it's the Bureau of Land Management environmental impact statement, whatever it might be. As long as you have bureaucrats you must anticipate change orders, contradictory orders, and "do it right now" or "hold off until we tell ya—we'll be back in a year," this sort of a timetable that they're all confronted with.

And as we talk or write this down at this point, not in time, but point of review of the status of the ammunition depot, that somewhere in there (so that someone can find a record at another time), we do have a lot of peacetime service at this ammunition depot. One is what we call the 2.75 rocket test site; it's located about five miles south of Hawthorne, and, incidentally, it was chosen by an Army general. Hawthorne was chosen over Yuma, Arizona three years ago. And a goodly number of dollars have been expended out there shearing off the top of a mountain, putting in huge launching pads. But at this one test site, south of Hawthorne, they can test anything from rocket firing to the Army's heavy artillery, going downrange, doing nothing more than scaring a jackrabbit occasionally. No environmental problem, health or life hazard problem. And this we look to be expanded and developed because, again, on the eastern coast where the encroachment of the people, homes and highways and shopping centers are crowding the military out. I refer specifically to Dahlgren, Virginia, on the Navy side, and Aberdeen, Maryland, on the Army side—the Aberdeen Proving Grounds. Someday we look for a good part of those to be located in Hawthorne, or south of Hawthorne but attached to this depot. And that, I believe, is one of the reasons that they were lookin' at this single service management concept, because

the 2.75 rocket site is known as a tri-service management facility in which all branches of the service have access to it, not just the Navy.

Along with that and another peacetime function in the new western demilitarization facility (if you can't spell it, I'll help you with it afterwards [laughter]). That is government gobbledygook which means scrap and salvage and reclamation—or reclamation, scrap and salvage, whichever way you want to look at it. It's this new super-environmentally approved method of doing something with all types of military ammunition, and quite likely explosives used in nonmilitary fields of government or business or industry in a way that will, as I say, meet the standards that we now require. And I say "the standards"—for years it was common practice for a fleet upon return that had some highly dangerous or faulty ammunition that wouldn't past muster, and they wouldn't dare put it in shells or rifles; they'd dump it at sea, in some instances. For years we had a demolition area located twenty-two miles south of Hawthorne where they took the unacceptable, substandard shells, dangerous ones out and blew them up. Caused a real roar and, once in a while, a real thump in town and some smoke in the air, and possibly something toxic in the air—we don't know; we weren't worried about it then. But to eliminate all that—the open burning, the open explosion, the dumping in the ocean—this western "demil" facility, as we call it, will serve all branches of the service and for all the western states area. It is scheduled for completion in 1979. It was originally planned about 1966 at an estimated cost of fifteen and a half million dollars. The first three increments were to embrace within two contracts; one was about eleven million six, the other just short of five million. So the first three increments have exceeded the sixteen and a half million mark, not the fifteen and a half.

The original fifteen and a half also included a boiler plant, but that had to be pulled out and set aside as a separate contract. That is now under construction, and the contract price is seven and one-third million dollars; the original estimate was about 1.9.

However, intervening was what we called an energy shortage; we weren't gonna be able to get oil all the time from the Arabs. We'd better start mining some of our own coal, so it had to be converted to a coal-burning, coal-fired unit. That's what took that cost up over seven million dollars. They have to provide for railroad spurs, dumping into hopper-type coal cars, three huge silos that you can see from the highway with all their scrubbers to do everything that Kennecott [Copper Corporation] is attempting to do, and the mass of control systems and that. There's still a fourth increment to be let for bid sometime this month. The projected cost has already exceeded thirty million dollars with the equipment—the exotic equipment. There's two different design firms, one from Ohio and one, I think, from Kentucky somewhere, large engineering firms designing all the equipment to operate this plant. That will cost another ten million, so now they're referring to it as a forty-million-dollar plant. But an Army general who will be responsible for a lot of the operation, from Rock Island, Illinois, told me that they now figure it will be a fifty-million-dollar plant. It was originally estimated that it would employ—upon completion and placed in operation, possibly eighty people would be employed. They're now figurin' it might employ one hundred and twenty-five people. Fifty million dollars. What a ratio!

Unfortunately, it's not only the price we pay for inflation; it's the price we pay for what we would like to think is total, complete and safe control of pollutants enterin' the air. So there is a pricetag on it. I won't say

it's a boondoggle—I'm positive it isn't—but it's a very costly venture into promoting the environmental picture that I think that most of us want and hope we can have. But I say, we must be prepared to pay for it. There's no cheap way of eliminating dumping in the ocean or blowing stuff up south of Hawthorne, Nevada. And particularly, the very nature of the animal you're dealing with, where nothing's permitted to go into the air. So there is a general picture, with a few torn edges on it, of our Hawthorne NAD.

Well, one Saturday there were two or three Marines that just couldn't find a ride any which way, and I believe all of them had dates in Fallon; they just had to get to a dance somehow. And even Marines are ingenious at times and they knew where the executive officer's automobile was parked, a rather sleek-lookin', black Model-A Ford sedan. And they got started in a distant garage, clever enough not to go through the main gate where the sentry was on duty; they went directly north through the sand till they came to the fence that encloses the ammunition depot, and with proper tools cut a section of wire that could be bent back sufficiently to allow an automobile to pass through, which it did, quickly replaced the wire in position (although not as good a condition as before the wire snips reached it), drove to Fallon, had a great time, had that nice car of the executive officer's parked on the main street. Practically all of us knew who came in the executive officer's car—men, women and children—and nothing was said. But the boys made one grave error; they could get to Fallon and back on that tank of gasoline, but they should have filled at Fallon because on Monday morning when the executive officer went to his car and drove from the industrial area, as we call it, eastward seven miles to the ordnance area, in the general location of Thorne, he ran out of

gasoline. Well, he knew it had been filled on Saturday noon, which was then the quitting time. Well, one of the gravest and greatest investigations that had ever been conducted at Hawthorne NAD up to that time, which by now was about a year old, was initiated. More Marines were called on the carpet to testify, even civilians in town were asked to please come volunteer what information they had. They had any number of willing volunteers from town and the Marines responded as ordered, and it was probably a prime example of communitywide poor eyesight, or total lack of memory on the part of so many citizens from one town [chuckling], 'cause there was not a soul in this area could recall seeing anyone in the executive officer's automobile, as to which Marines were there on liberty, and which were not. Well, they were very vague; they knew they had seen the fellow, but they couldn't recall whether it was that particular Saturday night of the previous dance in town, or whether they'd seen them uptown a week before that. By the time this old "exec" left the depot [chuckling] one of his saddest memories was that he was never able to determine who took his automobile, cut a hole in the fence of the Naval Ammunition Depot, drove that car to Fallon, returned it low or almost completely out of gasoline, and no one was punished. No reprimand could ever be given out because, I think, unless they've closed the investigation and he's long since gone to his reward, why, I doubt if the CIA could have found out that night, because they just didn't squeal on one another [chuckling]. That, I say, are some of the interesting little things that helped to get the depot started.

DEPOT COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Well, we've been talking about the more serious side of the ammunition depot: when,

why, and how it was built, and its purpose and mission. Of course, like any other construction project, industrial development, or mining operation, just as they had excitement in the boom mining camps about Nevada and elsewhere, there were also some amusing sides to the beginning of this ammunition depot.

I might call it the rebirth of Hawthorne, because the town was so small until they came in, and then began to grow back into a little town of Nevada, instead of a tiny one. I believe the 1930 census showed Hawthorne about 850 people; that included a lot of construction workers who were here then, too.

Being that small and only the limited one-square-mile area of land, and a few buildings on it, the town and the depot, as they started out, were virtually one. You must remember there was no Babbitt, nothing in between town and what is the industrial area of the depot, the large shopping center and all, nothing but sand and sagebrush and weeds in those days.

So, for social activities, little diversion, they would have Saturday night dances in Hawthorne, regularly, which most of the people still working at the depot (that is, those working in construction and those assigned, military and civilians) would come to the dances uptown, the old Knights of Pythias hall or occasionally the high school gymnasium. And they, in turn, would reciprocate by having a dance at what was called the theater—Depot Theater building—nice hardwood floor, very small, two-lane bowling alley downstairs at that time. It was converted in World War II as a temporary chapel; following that war it was made into an officer's club, and to this day is called the "All Hands Club," being the combination of both military and civilian. So, it was the social center of the Naval depot.

And the dances, as I say, became the regular entertainment for the community

because they did have a motion picture show here as we called it (theater, some call it still), an old motion picture show with one show on Wednesday, one on Saturday and Sunday (although Sunday was a rerun of the picture they had showed on Saturday), so that dancing was quite the popular diversion, and having a party at the lake in warmer weather.

The Marines, in need of dancing partners and the like, and Hawthorne unable to supply the need, at least only a small portion thereof, why, they made arrangements to have a bus of people come from Fallon, giving priority to young girls (good lookin' and otherwise), but they needed someone to dance with. So the Fallon group would come to Hawthorne and join in the dances at the Naval depot, and then they'd have a midnight supper over at the Marine barracks and we'd all join in that.

And then Fallon would reciprocate in kind, by putting on a special dance a few weeks later (or not too much later), and invite the community of Hawthorne, particularly those young, unattached Marines, to Fallon. And this went on regularly for a year or so.

I mentioned about the "horse Marines," of course, and there's a little amusing side to that, too, when we had the horse Marines. There's lots of times when the Marines were supposed to be dutifully guarding this vast ammunition depot, and all it had stored in it was a lot of, what you might term, "junk": World War I explosives—the shells, the hardware of those World War I mines, still very valuable once cleaned out and reloaded. But at the moment the only danger would be to a person gettin' near them or foolin' around with them. No one was going to steal them; first of all, they were too heavy.

But occasionally some of the young gals would like to drive out in the general remote area and provide a little company for the Marines while they were pullin' their

guard duty and go horseback riding in the moonlight [chuckling] on the back of the Marine horses! There again was one of those things that didn't reach the central intelligence or the command post or anything else.

There were occasions when you'd have a cranky officer or a cranky noncom, and we had a couple such at the same time one time. And when the Marines were patrolling on horse or even in the sentry box out in the ordnance area seven miles away, they had this little concrete sentry station with no stove in it. It can get pretty cold at night, early hours of the morning, in the Hawthorne area—snow on the ground. So the Marines had a habit of stocking wood in strategic places during the day; whoever pulled daytime guard duty would leave it for the next men coming on. And they used to build a little fire, might call it Indian fashion—or *could* in the old days (I don't think you're supposed to say that now)—right in the concrete deck. Well, this one cranky noncom detected somewhat blackened eyes, underneath the eyes—nothing more than soot. But he noticed something strange about these Marines coming off duty those cold hours of the morning, particularly at four in the morning when they would change the guard. And he did a little snooping and he found a considerably burned scar on the concrete deck, as they called that little box, and they hauled in a lot of Marines and none of the Marines could recall having seen any fire or having started one.

So this sergeant, with approval of one officer not too sympathetic with the freezing assignment of his own men, set up what was later called the "weasel patrol." He would go out on his own at ungodly hours in the morning in an effort to catch these Marines in the act of actually starting these fires. As he left the main gate of the ammunition depot heading eastward, those seven miles I mentioned,

he would drive for a short distance with his lights on and then drive the full distance with the lights of the automobile not only dim, but the last area completely extinguished, I guess you would call it. However, the loyal Marines who were on duty at the main gate of the ammunition depot, which he had passed through just a short time before, had devised a system of shorting out an overhead lamp light that rested above the main sentry box in the industrial area. Well, with their own form of Morse code, and a certain number of blinks which could be seen seven miles away, the warning was given. And by the time the weasel patrol arrived, once again there were some black marks on the floor, or the deck, of the little sentry box in the ordnance area—no fire visible, no wood, no indication anywhere. And that, again, remains one of those unsolved mysteries pertaining to the early days of Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot [laughter].

Oh good heavens, I could tell a lot of little anecdotes, I guess, about the depot—some pleasant, some possibly not so pleasant. Oh, one I recall—when Captain Babbitt, as we always called him (he was promoted from commander to captain when he took command of the depot from Commander Bernard in late 1932 or early 1933)—when he arrived, he was not as razorback or rigid about the presence of alcohol on the station as was his predecessor, but he was death on dogs, almost literally. He would not permit a dog on the station; and having a very distinct Scotch brogue, he'd order the Marines whenever he saw a dog, or two little pups runnin' around, immediately get on the telephone and call the Marine barracks and say, "Get 'em oota here. Get 'em oot! Shoot 'em if you have to!" Well, it was not uncommon to see two husky Marines drivin' around town in Hawthorne in a pickup, knocking on doors and asking

if anyone would like to have a nice little puppy for their children [chuckling]! The big, tough Marines just didn't have the heart to do away with some of those little stray pups that strayed onto the ammunition depot. As a matter of fact, some of them would find their way back to the rightful owner. And other than his antipathy toward those dogs, Babbitt was a rather pleasant fellow, little more jovial than Bernard, but somewhat straitlaced—never seemed to be drinking. I keep stressing that because we were still in the phase-out of Prohibition, and we had rules, regulations, standards and double standards. But the first time that Mrs. Babbitt made a trip East to visit relatives, the captain attended a party in town. It was a going away party for a Marine commanding officer, and this was in 1934. Prohibition, for all intents and purposes, had gone down the drain a year before, although they were waiting, I believe, the approved ratification of repeal by one or two states. And the "Old Man," as they called him, really celebrated that night. He had the time of his life and, returning home to the depot in those early hours in the morning, he had a little difficulty in manipulating that old Peerless automobile, which was as long as a hearse, through the main gate. The main gate in those days, they called it, was just two swinging gates that were drawn together and held secure in the center by a huge spike arrangement that was the stopper. Only one of the two gates would be open at night. As Captain Babbitt drove through, seeking to calculate the distance from the right side of the automobile to the one side of the gate and the other side of the automobile to the point of that spike, he had a slight case of misjudgment. The left front tire and the left rear tire both passed over the spike. Both tires blown, the car had to be pulled off the side of the road, and someone had to give the captain

a ride to his own quarters which is about another half mile away. Monday morning, an order went out from the commanding officer that the spike would be removed from the center separation point of the two gates situated at the main gate entrance. And the spike was removed [laughter].

Captain Babbitt also was a good community-minded man. When the Three-C camps were brought in here (Civilian Conservation Corps—we always called them the C's or the Three C's; we first had one and eventually a second one located within the Naval Ammunition Depot area), and even though this was a military reservation and they were facing something new—first time a situation where a group of civilians from all over the United States brought in, stationed in some quickly erected frame barracks—the captain saw an opportunity to really improve his depot without benefit of funding from congress (which he seemed unable to get), and he outlined work that would have continued well into the 1940s had the program not been interrupted by World War II.

Captain Babbitt had those Three-C boys working on top of Mount Grant 'n lower slopes of Mount Grant because, theoretically, their program was one of reforestation; those were the words Franklin D. Roosevelt used when he created the Three C's. As part of that reforestation program, Captain Babbitt succeeded in having a dam built; it's now known as the Rose Creek dam at the Naval Ammunition Depot. That became a very vital link in the depot's water supply at that time during the war, and right today it remains. He had those boys build roads to the top of Mount Grant, and they made a complete circle, as it might be called, working their way through Cottonwood Canyon north of Hawthorne to the very top of Mount Grant moving southward, connecting up with what

was called the Corey Canyon road to the south of Hawthorne, improving that, even across the town and county property because it was helping to protect Hawthorne's water system. And those roads remain there to this day. Prior to that there had never been any interconnecting or complete roads up, over and around Mount Grant.

I cite these as just a couple of points to show what a farsighted man could do. Captain Babbitt was really a man of foresight and did a lot in helping, not only to improve the station to expand in his own small way, but certainly to prepare it for the rougher years that were to come.

One other not so amusing incident (confrontation, whatever you wish to call it) between town and depot actually started over a game of tennis that developed into a little rivalry between those in town who could play tennis [and] those at the Naval depot who couldn't. The depot at first was very gracious since they had a tennis court; the town did not. It had one with blacktop, but they later converted it to an outdoor basketball court; and then after the gymnasium was built, why, they used it to park cars on. So, without this tennis court in town, the town tennis players would go to the depot, and it was agreed there would be a tournament between depot players and town players. Well, it was a one-hundred-percent victory for the town—men's singles, ladies' singles, doubles and mixed doubles—and it left the Marine commanding officer a little disappointed because he thought he was going to be the tennis champion of the area.

It so happened that our principal of our elementary school, Al Bernes, was a little bit better tennis player. And in the course of the finals, the town people cheered rather lustily, maybe not properly at least by British standards, but by Nevada standards we yelled and hollered and cheered on our players.

And we were told at the conclusion of the tournament that our conduct was anything but professional or polite. A few words were exchanged, nothing further at that time.

But about a week later the Marine commanding officer's daughter, one of his daughters, attending the elementary school, was reprimanded by one of the teachers—I guess I should admit this—who later became my wife. The Marine commanding officer came up to the school, and his conduct was anything [but] that would meet British standards of gentlemanly decorum, and was rather rough, and caused a disturbance to the extent that the principal could overhear and he interceded. And after a few exchanges of words, the tennis match of a short time before might or might not have been forgotten, but at this point the Marine commanding officer invited the school principal to step outside the building which the principal did.

The principal, usin' good judgment, allowed the officer to strike the first blow. The principal later said that could have been a mistake. He says, "He carried a pretty good wallop." But Bernes recovered quickly, and the two of them slugged it out on the school grounds with the kids from two classes, one on either side of the entrance, all jammed at the window, the teachers unable to pull 'em back from the ringside position they enjoyed [chuckling] watching. And about the third time down, the Marine captain admitted he had had enough—he was licked—but he still intended to pursue what he deemed an improper reprimand of his daughter by the teacher.

Well, of course, letters were written to Carson City immediately to the state Department of Education. The school board had to have a meeting to review the situation. The depot command was drawn into it to see what had happened to the relations

between town and depot. And the state Department of Education sent in a deputy superintendent of public instruction who had to take testimony, hear witnesses, go through the usual procedures of a hearing. And the final conclusion—and I think it ended the incident when the Marine commanding officer rather pointedly said that he came from a fighting organization and he intended to fight all the way. The deputy superintendent of public instruction, the late Ray Killian, assured the captain that he admired him for his honesty and temerity, but also stated that in his position (the field of education and representing the state of Nevada) and the state of Nevada believe in fighting when they thought the cause was right, and that they had a long-standing law that gave them authority to prosecute any person causing a disturbance within so many feet or yards of a school building, and that the captain's conduct initiating a challenge and coming into the building without prior appointment constituted what Killian believed a clear-cut violation of the law, and that they would take steps to pursue the state's side of it. That was the close of the incident.

From time to time, we would have a few more flare-ups between town and depot, military and civilian, during those Depression years when the CC camps were here. We had a strange conglomeration—male society—yet all basically good Americans. Most of our Marines were from southern states, but one CC camp made up of boys largely from Utah, young men, some of whom had one or two years in college and because of the Depression had to drop out. They showed that on the basketball court when they played like professionals—match of any college team, that one particular camp. And the other camp was what you would see possibly on a Jackie Gleason show or in Shea Stadium in New

York. All these poor young fellas dragged all the way across the country from New Jersey (“joisey” as they called it) and New York, as we would refer to it, and they were all the way from Brooklyn to Long Island [imitating a New York accent and chuckling].

When the longer days and warmer weather came and we developed a softball league, it was a riot. It's just unfortunate we didn't have the tape recorders in those days—to hear the three distinct versions of the English language in their cheers, their catcalls, their arguments with one another [chuckling]: The Brooklynese; the deep South—“you all boys” arguin' with the “dese and dose” from “Joisey;” and our good Utah boys with their flat a's, their “harses” and what not. It was, I believe, a passing lesson in humanity, in linguistics, whatever you care to call it. They would have their differences, oh, an occasional fist fight. But, it was an old corny expression I use—“welding and melding,” bringing together a true cross-section of America; and when World War II broke out—particularly those younger Marines—quite a few of those CC boys were later to find themselves fighting side by side for this country. And some who were probably past the age, very essential to the Naval depot, who had come here with the Three Cs, some of the Marines, were then helping back up the fighting men by workin' at the ammunition depot. Many of those who went into the service from Hawthorne, products of the CC camps and our Marine station here, returned after the war to make this their permanent home, and today many of 'em are still here. We're very proud of some of our leading citizens who first came to Hawthorne as fighting Marines or as rugged CC boys workin' up in the canyons and the hills and down on the flat.

One other amusing show that I recall, man-made show, self-made—one of the great

sports in Hawthorne was to “job” somebody. We used to use the expression “job”—that was the practical joker or just setting somebody up for laughs or kicks. And more often ’n not, it centered around a character (and he definitely was a character that we had in Hawthorne) who came to Hawthorne in ’28 when it was first announced that they were building the ammunition depot. He was a renegade Irish Australian, had come here from Australia, “Austrylia” [mimicking the Aussie accent], as he called it—J. F. McLaughlin. He was a proclaimed Socialist, a professed atheist, and if given the opportunity, said he would like to be a revolutionary. These are by his own statements. He was pro-Communist, anti-capitalist, and just what the word had many times been attached to him—radical (but, of course, you can be a radical conservative as well as a radical liberal). But this was Mac. But people were amused by it because not only was he so open and frank about his position on politics, but basically he was a rugged individualist and didn’t realize it. He not only was in business makin’ a living sellin’ gasoline and oil—the products of major oil companies—but before Prohibition went out, why, for the accommodation of his gasoline customers and who didn’t want to drive on to the next town, he usually had a bottle in the little apartment, as you might term it, that he had next to his service station and he sold a little whiskey on the side. But he was anti-capitalist and strong Socialist; although he didn’t share the whiskey, he sold it for a profit. And Mac would expound by the hour if anyone drove into the station. And if things were slack, he would walk away from the station, cross the main street in Hawthorne, up a half block to a barbershop that was bein’ operated then by a young man who was with the early, or among the first, contingent of the Marines to have reached Hawthorne—Walker

Chapman, nicknamed Jed—tall, good-lookin’ boy out of the Carolina hills, who now lives in Fallon, Nevada, retired. And Chapman had a buddy—another among those first Marines who stayed on to live in. Hawthorne—Bob Peterson, [who] was for a time a bus driver on the LTR bus line, and then for many years a top ordnance man at the ammunition depot until his retirement.

Well, when Chapman and Peterson got together and things were dull or quiet in Hawthorne, you could figure that somebody, somewhere up and down the street was going to get jobbed. And they became great friends of McLaughlin, and—I started this by saying McLaughlin used to walk to Chapman’s barbershop. There, Peterson and Chapman would tell McLaughlin the damndest lies that any *three* men should be able to think up; but those two would come in rapid fire succession, and they’d send McLaughlin off in a tirade.

One such tirade I recall. He left the barbershop, went across the street, back east side of the street, a little north to the Hawthorne Mercantile. And here was his statement as he entered the store to a young clerk named Charlie Scatena: “Charlie, I thought we were friends, but I just learned you flimflammed me.”

Scatena’s response: “Why, Mac, what did I do?”

He says, “You know, you know damn well what you did to me. When I come in here the other day to buy a bottle of Scrugham’s Seven Crown whiskey, I distinctly said Seven Crown,” and he says, “and you peddled me a bottle of Scrugham’s Five Crown.” (I might note there that the actual name was Seagram’s, but with McLaughlin it had to be Scrugham’s because Scrugham happened to be on his mind at the time and was our congressman.) [Chuckling] That was one case where he accused someone of flimflamming him.

Another time when Chapman and Peterson—[chuckling] for want of something better to do, they told McLaughlin they were going pheasant hunting and, upon their return, they would pick and clean the pheasants if McLaughlin would cook them. And he said he would.

Chapman and Peterson did not go pheasant hunting. They did go to the Mercantile, and again with their buddy Charlie Scatena, arranged for him to pick out a couple of real small chickens, the smallest he had. They were picked and cleaned. Then they took an ice pick and punched holes in the two small chickens, even imbedded a BE or two (the shot that comes from a shotgun shell) and bruised it in a couple of places.

They took them to McLaughlin, but they insisted on having two or three quick drinks, which Mac was never one to say no at a time like that. Then they insisted that Mac hurry up and get those pheasants cooked as quickly as he could—to do the job right. Well, he proceeded, and they'd have another drink or two. Well, Mac really worked on those chickens, and when he served 'em, Chapman and Peterson began to rave about the tremendous flavor—there was nothing to beat pheasant, finest fowl that a man can eat, particularly wildfowl. And McLaughlin agreed with them a thousand percent, and he said that that's one thing he could always do—was tell pheasant from any other kind of wild game, and he knew that these had to be some of the finest he'd ever eaten. It was some time later before McLaughlin found that all he had that evening was a chicken dinner [chuckling].

And I cite this [chuckling]—I can tell many more that—the little things they had to do in a small community. It was either that or stand around and gripe about the world, or complain there was nothing to do,

and no entertainment. Some of the greatest entertainment that I've seen in Hawthorne was that that was produced on the spur of the moment by those looking for entertainment.

The one other thing about this old fellow McLaughlin—oh, he was independent. He'd be in Chapman's barbershop expounding upon the evils of the world and the evils of capitalism. He always quoted Redpath's history, but as he referred to him, it was "Red Pat's" history. An' often I think that possibly McLaughlin gave the man a better name than his parents did [chuckling] when he called him "Red

And Peterson and Chapman could give signals—someone goin' down the street, you know, that kind of signal? They'd point to the station meaning "Mac's in here making a speech." Well, one day I happened to be in there myself when someone caught the eye. They drove into McLaughlin's service station, which you could see from the front end of the barbershop if you went to the corner of the window; you could look straight down the street—the town isn't that big—an' it was only half a block away. They would pull into the unattended service station and just lay on the horn—blow, blow, blow. And then Chapman and Peterson'd say, "Mac, you'd better go down to the station; you've got a customer down there." And then he'd start about halfway down; the car would pull out. Then he would come back fighting mad.

On another occasion that I was in there—same routine, he's in makin' his speech, but this time I think it was a legitimate customer. And they said, "Mac, you have a customer at the station." And he got out about the edge of the sidewalk; he could recognize it had a California license.

He says, "Oh, it's only some damn Californian; he probably wants only a gallon or two—to hell with him. I want to finish my

story.” [Chuckling] And he wouldn’t go wait on the man.

He refused to change automobile tires, although he was running a service station. He said he was too old for that, and these young people, if they didn’t know how to change an automobile tire, they were gonna have a hard time gettin’ through life. He’d let them use the tools, but they had to change their own tires [chuckling]!

WORLD WAR II

The depot started expanding gradually in 1939; I say gradually—the first expansion contract that was let was to William P. Niel Company, Ltd. of Los Angeles. And that was on a contract for about \$345,000 which congress could appropriate without any authorization because it was the remaining balance of the original three and a half million authorized for the construction of the depot in 1928. It sat there for eleven years.

And then, of course, as the war in Europe expanded, it became more evident that we were into the war; I say we—the United States Navy played a very important part in that war in 1940 prior to Pearl Harbor and so did the ammunition depot. This ammunition depot began to mushroom and grow, expand in production, because we were shippin’ a tremendous amount of ammunition to Nova Scotia to protect that little country. What the Nova Scotians did with that ammunition after it arrived there we don’t know, and none of us cared to know. If they happened to lend-lease some to Great Britain, that’s something we don’t know about and had no way of proving. But they were turnin’ out a tremendous amount of ammunition here prior to Pearl Harbor; and of course, when Pearl Harbor [was] hit, then the sky was the limit on expansion.

And at the peak of World War II, the depot had just short of three thousand civilian employees. The Marine unit had been expanded from about a hundred and twenty to more than five hundred, and in addition, what we termed a “slave labor battalion” of enlisted men in the Navy. They’d enlist in the Navy to go to sea, and they came to Hawthorne instead, to work as laborers side by side [chuckling] with the high-paid regular workers. Oh, they were a little embittered about it and they would express their feelings best, you know, in the town barrooms and the like; but nevertheless, they were patriotic and did a tremendous job. I think one of the greatest tributes you can give to anyone was the vast number of swabbies, blue jackets, whatever you want to call ’em—but those thirty-eight hundred enlisted sailors who were doin’ nothing more than, I say, servin’ as a slave labor battalion. They worked side by side with all others in turning out the work.

And then the big buildup came in 1940. Then, of course, with the strike at Pearl Harbor, all hell broke loose. They couldn’t spend the money fast enough or in sums large enough it *seemed*, but yet it was necessary. Now they were tryin’ to make up for all the lost time of the 1930s, which, incidentally, I have a copy of an old bill introduced in the U.S. Senate by Pat McCarran in 1936 where he was askin’ for a little more than a million dollars for construction of needed facilities at Hawthorne, including a bachelor officers quarters, items that long had been postponed. And he was a little premature—in 1936 the people were not ready or willing to put money in the defense.

The same items that McCarran had requested in that 1936 Senate bill were all constructed later, but at a cost of many millions of dollars, not the one million plus that he was seeking. And the bulging period

of '41 to '45 saw Hawthorne just burst at the seams. Some areas reminiscent of the early-day mining booms; other ways it appeared to be the confusion of the French army in retreat and tryin' to get around the peasants who were movin' down the roads and blockin' the movements. It was just the way everything went around here. Every day it was something new, and how to handle it.

The census I recall from memory, and that could be checked. I think in 1940 when Mineral County had jumped to 1,280 from eight hundred and some odd, we realized that we were growing. And to realize that between three and four years later there would be more than thirteen thousand people in this area. That was the pretty accurate census record that they would have then because everybody was on a government payroll or a contractor's payroll, and you could come within a few hundred. But it actually exceeded thirteen thousand. And at that time, Mineral County had the greatest growth—when they took that special census—of any county in the United States, of course, it was temporary and short-lived. [Consults papers]

Yes, in 1940 the population of Mineral County was 1,280, and I was hopin' I had one of the twenties and thirties. I have one somewhere; it was down almost nil. I'll find it for you and tell you later, but it was—I don't have the word to describe it. Some would call it fantastic, others'd call it frightening, and others, "Oh my God," you'd say.

There actually were little nine-by-twelve cabins bein' thrown up overnight all over town. Put four beds in a cabin, and the workmen out on the job rented them by the shift, not by the day. They had eight hours, and then get up and go to work or wherever they wanted to go because someone else had to sleep in those beds. So that it was not too much unlike, I guess, some of the boom days

of the late nineteenth century and early 1900s in Nevada.

The Babbitt housing project came into being because of this. The first fifty units in Babbitt were built in 1940, prior to Pearl Harbor, and they were filled rather rapidly. And it was just prior to our entry into the war that a few additional houses were offered. I say "a few"—I think another hundred or hundred and fifty. But to shorten up this story—by the time the war ended, there were 1,150 housing units on the flat between Hawthorne and the main gate of the Naval depot, about half of them still remain, or less than half. They've been sold through the years, excess and surplus. And the town itself had trailer parks overlapping, blocking the alleys. (I recall one fire in a trailer park, not too far from this office up here. They had the trailers jam-packed so tight that the fire truck couldn't get up the alley, had to go clear around the trailer park to reach the hydrant on the other end of the alley; and the firemen had great difficulty carrying a hose between two trailers, they were packed so closely.) But, it was a wartime situation and all rules were suspended, so to speak, no building code, no fire code.

Other than what I've told you about the depot, the general idea—and good heavens, reams were written about it during the war. And, of course, I was gone from August '43 until September '45, so I missed some of the real big hoedowns and knockdowns and everything that went on around town during that period because I didn't get my first furlough from Camp Roberts, California until June of '44. I did get home for ten days, I think it was, then, and saw a little of the excitement and some of the rules that had been put in.

First I think they had the 2:00 a.m. closing and then, again, it was cut to 1:00 and maybe midnight. The Army'd make a

request; the county commissioners would enact ordinances. But I do know this; that all military men had to be out of the bars and everything by twelve o'clock, because I went over town that one night visiting—say hello to everybody I knew and a lot of people I didn't know. Some Navy shore patrolman came up and nudged me a little bit in the ribs with a stick. He says, "Look at the clock."

And I said, "Yeah, I know it's quarter to twelve. Why?"

"Better get movin'. Better not be caught in here with a uniform on."

So I asked two or three of the fellas, "Well, what the hell is this? I'm gonna lose the war?" I said, "All's I'm doin' is takin' compulsory military training in Camp Roberts, California. Now I can't even stay in my old friend's bar!"

So we talked to a couple of fellas. They said, "Well, you still have some clothes at home, don't ya?"

So we slipped over to the house and I got the "monkey suit" off, as we called the old khakis—summertime—and put on a pair of slacks or a suit or something; I don't know. I know it didn't fit me because, I tell you, after seventeen weeks of basic training in the infantry, that's better than the Weight Watchers for losing a pot belly, and I'd lost mine [laughing]!

But anyhow, we didn't go back to the same bar. Now we're in civilian clothes, and we went back and were talkin'. And we stuck around till about one o'clock 'cause none of the local SPs knew me, I didn't know them, and just showed up at another place. And just one more little thing, [as] I say, that I can recall of that period. But I missed a lot of the big excitement, I have to admit, during that '43 to '45 period.

A little on that recreation side, that we had discussed earlier. The USO building was built in the early part of the war, I think possibly in '41 prior to Pearl Harbor or just after (you

can always check that—I haven't gone to any trouble of listing this 'cause I'm not writing the book; I'm tellin' you a lot of stories, and you want to do it), and it served a great purpose, the USO building. But as it turned out, the one building, the one staff—at the time one of the largest buildings in Hawthorne—the way this whole war situation mushroomed, they could have used two or three. And then that's during Babbitt they realized [that], and they had to put in a recreation hall in Babbitt in addition to the USO—the Babbitt recreation hall, of course, open to the war workers, as they called them, and their families, and servicemen.

And the one group that, by my recollection, that really came in and took an interest in the community was the American Women's Volunteer Service, a group out of Reno. Then they, in turn, interested a number of local women—the wives of people at the depot, the wives of people in the community. ("Wives of people," why I'm soundin' like ERA now. Wives of *men*, damn it; I'm slipping. I want to get that *men* in there—not wives of *people*. [Laughing] Of course in this modern day, with bi-sexualness and that, I guess some could be the wife of another one, I don't know. They weren't then, at least not in the service!)

I was gone during most that period, I had said; but still, readin' in my own sheet and talkin' to people later that I think they made a tremendous contribution to the community—the American Women's Volunteer Service. And I'd never heard of them before myself, and I don't know whether it was a carry-over from the Daughters of the American Revolution or Anne Martin's campaign or what it might have been; but I think that probably they were the forerunners of today's "[women] libbers." But they wanted to get out and show that women could do a job and contribute to the war effort. And they probably were the ones that promoted anything tending on that patriotic

side that we had mentioned, you know, the “promotion of patriotism,” as I say.

You mentioned about World War I, and there was, I believe, a different feeling (in some areas too much so) anti-German. I remember as a kid, old man Davis in Goldfield had (I think I mentioned that once)—had to stop sellin’ spitz dogs because a spitz dog was classed as pro-German. One family had a little dachshund and kids’d throw rocks at it because it was a German dog—such ridiculous bias and prejudice as that. But during World War II, I think it was a little different attitude. There was unity (called “solidity” or something) among American men and women both, whether in service or out of service, that they had a war to win, that we had been attacked at Pearl Harbor and believed in some ways justified a war. But the patriotic pitch didn’t seem to be there insofar as supporting Washington was concerned. And I could say this I thought myself: that Washington, with its unusual or maybe unnecessary regulations, contributed to the abiding of loyalties of a person for supportin’ the government—its war effort—but not too enthused over the way it was conducted on the home front.

I speak now of rationing—shoe rationing for little kids, and some warehouse is filled, and poor little kids waitin’ around. By the time they got the shoe stamp approved, why, he needed one size larger and then had to go back and have a change and all that. I think that the shoe stamp angle was completely bungled.

The gasoline rationing—it made a nation of bootleggers out of us, more so even than the Volstead Act because people had to get from here to there, other times they wanted to get from here to there for recreation. They saw the tremendous waste by the government of many commodities, including gasoline, and

it became just, I believe, a nationwide “what the hell” attitude. I know that in my own case we would do it this way: I did not smoke cigarettes; I even had a little trouble gettin’ pipe tobacco ’cause of the brand I’d been smokin’ since ’34 and still use it. I was gettin’ my tobacco from Tonopah, Nevada. Charlie Stewart, not little, but a pretty good-size black man that had operated the shoe shine parlor there for years, sold cigarettes and tobacco; and he would send it to me from Tonopah as a courtesy, and I would pay him for it.

But there in camp and knowing the limitation on cigarettes (ridiculous limitation); as I recall, I think it was every other Friday that each GI was allowed to buy two cartons of cigarettes. They’d probably be storin’ them all week long or the preceding week at each PX. Well, we had about forty PXs spread all over Camp Roberts; it was a big place. And on that particular Friday I would spend about an hour and a half, whether on duty or off duty—I had my old Pontiac car parked over by the motor pool and I would drive from one PX to the next, and I would wind up with sixteen to twenty cartons of cigarettes. Now I was in a position to go to the negotiating table. The boys that wanted cigarettes and didn’t have ’em, wanted cigarettes, and they knew I wanted some gasoline stamps. And we were tradin’ back and forth all the time because many of them didn’t even have an automobile, but they were gettin’ stamps from home or somewhere in case they wanted to hitch a ride, and that’s the way you’d do it. The stamps looked better than the cash. And so, I know how *I* did it in my own case, and it was done right here in town among civilians and everything else.

At one store here (I was told by my old former partner, now deceased)—when he’d get a good load of cigarettes in—but he also got stuck with a lot of tequila because to get

whiskey, the wholesalers were jabbin' the retailers, and they had to take so much tequila if they wanted to get a few bottles of bonafide bourbon. And they said he would take some heavy cord [and] he'd wrap a bottle of tequila around a carton of cigarettes. People who smoke cigarettes'd go in the store and buy a carton of cigarettes and a bottle of tequila [chuckles]. Could buy the *tequila* alone, but not cigarettes without it! And that was one of the ways it was done.

And this was goin' on back and forth over tires: someone tradin', you know, a bundle of cigarettes so he could get a tire without stamp of approval, without goin' through the ration board to get a certificate. And it became such common practice that that would be the one side, I'd say, that where the old spirit as I knew it as a little kid—the spirit of World War I—wasn't quite the same. Yes, the Americans were patriotic and they were loyal to their country, as a whole, and cussin' the administration out most the time—or particularly Washington, D.C.

I think the draft was bungled in many ways—the age factor. I saw that myself. An' just prior to the Battle of the Bulge and Franklin D. Roosevelt running for reelection in '44, it came out that we were winning the war, and he didn't want the draft boards drafting anyone over the age of twenty-six. Well at this time I was down in the company level there in Roberts, and I was thirty-two when I went in (that'd be in '43) and the supply sergeant was thirty-three; the mess sergeant was thirty-four. All of our officers were under thirty. And the three of us—the mess sergeant, the supply sergeant and myself—when we saw that in the *LA Times* one day, and Roosevelt's great speech (and they were both rabid Democrats; one was from Alabama, the other from Minnesota, and we'd kid about the politics)—when they saw

that announcement, the three of us walked in limping, holding a hip, bent over somewhat. And George Basta—now in Reno and [a] well-known businessman—was our company commander at the time. He'd been executive officer and the company commander moved on, and George was promoted. He was like an acting company commander, but he was *the* company commander at the time. And [he] looked up at us and he says, "What in the hell has happened to you three?"

We said, "We wanna go home."

He frowned and scowled a little bit; he said, "What are you talkin' about?"

"We wanna go home."

He said, "Who the hell doesn't? But," he says, "what's this pitch, what are you pullin' here?"

Then we pulled the newspaper and showed him that Roosevelt didn't want any more of those old goats any more. He wanted to just stop at twenty-six. [Laughing] And I remember Basta, remembered at the time, remarked that he was twenty-nine or something. And he said, "Well, wait a minute. If that's gonna be the basis, I get the first white paper. You fellas get behind me—get in line" [laughing]. And we kidded a little back and forth.

But then after the Bulge and after Roosevelt was reelected, they took it right back up to forty-two. And we fellas—and as I say, by this time I'm about thirty-three myself—we saw men coming in forty-one or forty-two [years of age], that the reason they hadn't been drafted before, they were the bottom of the barrel. We thought we were. Drag 'em in for six weeks, put 'em through that initial six weeks basic training (had been cut from seventeen to thirteen), but then see if they can stand up. At the end of six weeks we were dischargin' 'em like flies. The ones that cracked up in there, we sent 'em to Fort Ord for medical care. And

there was a lot of bungling went on. I saw (the old sayin' about this fella or that fella should've been in the service—each one had a reason for bein' where he was, I believe)—but I saw a lot of 'em, and I know at times they thought that about me, too. I saw a lot of 'em in uniform and under the draft that should never have been there. So the general handling of the war effort from Washington, I believe, diluted the otherwise determined patriotism that, there might have been. And I repeat that various type[s] of rationing—gasoline, tires, all—was so asinine.

Just one more aside on that—the officers were allowed to have liquor in their regimental quarters; even in their quarters some had little cabinets. Enlisted men were not. We were in our thirties and we had young kids—some had even finished basic at Roberts, went straight to Benning, came back as young “second looies” [second lieutenants]. They weren't old enough to vote yet by the age at that time, but havin' bars on their shoulders, they were supposedly capable of handling liquor. Those of us without the proper rank or rating, regardless of age, weren't. I mean stupid, inconsistent rules like that. I can never pronounce the word—divisiveness, divisiveness—whatever they want to call it; but it did contribute to, well I might say, a little strained feeling at times, even though they were all playin' on the same team. There was a little lack of rapport [chuckling], communication at times.

Speakin' from the civilian side—talked with many workers, those who wanted to be truly patriotic and contribute to the war effort; and they knew they were making big money and they were workin' long and workin' hard. I think their biggest complaint, as I could hear it around here, was waste. Waste in the sense not that anything was taken out, thrown away—oh, a certain amount of stuff

was always stolen off the job—they are right today; you can't build a hotel in Reno without missin' a lot of material and sometimes some of the tools. It was the idea of the constant change orders from Washington, from twelfth district. And the American public doesn't, I think, go along entirely with Kipling, that they think that they *do* have the “right to reason why.” And so many ways a job'd get started and suddenly be held up—”change it over here, do this one—all of which added to the total and end cost.

And, of course, that hasn't changed right to this day in the military or in the civilian life. You show me a state building, with or without bond issue, that the architect can get anywhere near in the ball park with his estimate against the actual bid price, from the lowest bidder on up to the others. And then once on a job, someone said, “Well, no, I don't believe we'll do it this way”—those rapid and massive changes that oftentimes contribute nothing to the end product. An' people workin' on the job began to recognize these things. And I would say that that was one of the real gripes that I heard from the civilian side.

My recollection on ordering the closure of the cathouse in Hawthorne, and the one down in Mina, was the result of the Sixth Army decision. Someway or another, the Sixth Army in San Francisco (out of the Presidio) had jurisdiction or authority in this matter, and they were *very* determined to close 'em up—not just Hawthorne or Mina, but Reno and all the rest of 'em. At the time we had a full captain as a medical officer at the ammunition depot, which is usually a little higher in grade than they have, but the depot dispensary's expanding, and [his] name was O. A. Smith.

And he was furious—almost violent—over the Army order, and made strong protests. He talked to me many times about it—and I do

not know whether he got an endorsement from his own captain (commanding officer at the ammunition depot at the time), but he strongly opposed it in writing and in person. Said he probably had the most complete record of any problems of venereal disease—particularly involving servicemen—of anyone around here, and he thought it was gonna be a great step backward. But, of course, the Army ordered it closed, and the Green Front was closed.

They did have street hustlers in Hawthorne; no problem there—up and down the street, everybody moving into town by the hundreds. Each day you didn't know one person from another, and it was a good marketplace for the gals to hustle with so many single servicemen. The Marine complement had been jumped from about 120 to more than 500; I mentioned the Navy bringing in 3,800 sailors.

But the real fallacy was proved by closing Hawthorne and closing Mina houses; an unusual type of boom occurred at Luning, twenty-four miles east of Hawthorne, and nine miles north and west of Mina, in between Hawthorne and Mina. Within a brief period after the Army's closure order was put into effect, there were three houses open and operating in Luning. And, to my knowledge, the Army never did learn of Luning, Nevada all through the war or after it. The only time Luning closed down was in the wind down of the war and lack of business. So all during that period that Hawthorne and Mina were closed, Luning was flourishing.

When we mention that regulation, I was trying to think of, oh, some of the other problems that arose—jurisdiction and responsibility in this crash program. Now we had a small county hospital erected in 1914 or '17 (somewhere in through there) south of town, and couldn't begin to take care of people, even on [an] outpatient system,

without some more rooms and some more facilities. Our schools were bulging. The little sewer system that we'd installed here was overloaded. Well, federal funds were obtained to provide some expansion for the hospital and the town water system and sewer system, as well as the schools, through the Lanham Act, as it was known. That was the granddaddy of these present Public Law 815 for school construction, Public Law 874 for school operation and maintenance; and it was a good sound program. That was the original bill on "impacted areas." It served a purpose and a good purpose.

It's a shame that it was ever allowed to die because these others came along during Korea to replace it, and they geared it only to schools and, good heavens, they so twisted it around, you know, that it was hard to believe. But even though Mineral County was by far the most impacted, and percentage of budget received a larger amount than any county in the state (and I'm speakin' now during the Korean period and right up to date), almost overnight Washoe County and Clark County were receiving more money than Mineral [County]. Someone discovered they had been impacted. When the old Reno Army Air Base was reactivated at Stead, why, that put a tremendous burden on Washoe County, supposedly. When they phased it out, Washoe squealed like hell and found it wasn't such a burden after all [laughing], and they thought it was the end of the road for them! Nellis Air Base, likewise, which was a backbone of Las Vegas's economy when tourism or something was down—that caused a great impact. So, as I say, that it's just too bad—the present, et cetera. Since then and right up to the present, this "impact formula" they use is far inferior to the old Lanham Act. But back to the Hawthorne side of it—they did put an addition onto the little county hospital

and added some school rooms. But in the meantime, the county [was] unable to cope with this surge of humanity, whatever you want to call it—problems.

Transportation—this new Babbitt had been built up, and they had a little shopping center in Babbitt. But to get people in the town and out without any waiting for regulations or authority, the Navy imported about fifteen of those big pusher-type buses—very similar to the ones that the Greyhound and other bus lines use—and they established their own route. And you'd think we were in a city because they had Route One, Route Twelve, Route Sixteen, and circling in and out of Babbitt. They were bringin' kids to school 'cause the school had no buses, and regulations and waivers and all that be damned—they had to get the kids to school in the morning; for a while they were on double session. They had to get a lot of workers to the job; the workers had no automobile and couldn't buy one. And that was one of the things I remember, was the bus system that the Navy had to create almost overnight, and said, "Well get authority for it later, after the war is over." [Chuckling] And it ran pretty well.

The only thing—the buses turned out to be some of the best available. And it was either Mare Island or Hunters Point found out about 'em, and they took the big pushers away from Hawthorne [chuckling] and sent in some a little smaller and less desirable. But they ran the bus service well past the end of World War II. They were still operating and knew just where they were going.

And it was, oh, several years after the war that they finally took the last bus off because people were beginnin' to buy automobiles again now, and the school had acquired some buses. The population of the school had dropped—well, the schools didn't drop for quite a while, but the general need for it and

the urgency of the old ten-hour-a-day shift, you know, and the seven days a week—car pools could be formed, and the like. But that was one of the things that I recall the Navy had to do without all the formality of gettin' approved for everything. They put it in almost overnight.

The Navy also built a supplemental power line from Mill Creek, California up in Mono County to the depot the early part of the war because the entire Naval depot and all of Mineral County were both dependent upon the one single transmission line owned by the Mineral County power system. And there's another strange angle—that up until the Navy got this one built on a crash basis just prior to the outbreak of the war right after Pearl Harbor, the Navy, from 1929 up until then, till '41 or '42, purchased its power from the Mineral County power system. [Chuckling] It was quite an arrangement. That was one more outgrowth of the war system, but then they were interchanged—had inter-ties—here at Hawthorne at the substation. And when the county line went out, we could switch to the Navy line. The Navy could switch to ours, if they were having trouble, on a limited basis because neither one could carry both of us together. But they could on a limited basis for lighting—not always for cooking or heavy-load work—but could give some service.

POST WORLD WAR II

The aftermath—we have some junky areas in Hawthorne, as any small community. (Oh, maybe a few spots in Reno as I was drivin' out toward Washoe Medical the other day and happened to get on a back road—you can see some strange ones there.) But the sad part was that while the community boomed, many people made bundles of money, most of them coming in from outside of Hawthorne

during the war. It was not the local people who got wealthy, in fact, because most of them were involved in working at the depot, but those camp followers, as you might call it, with the bars, gambling, used cars. You know what a difficult time people had getting transportation during the war—jacked the price up on used cars two and three times because people who were makin' big money could pay it.

It was a period of turmoil, and then possibly somewhat—I guess, as we read about the wind down in Vietnam, Thailand, or one of 'em, and the American troops' pullout and, "Where do they go from here?"—that the wind down from '46 to '50, Hawthorne was left, in some areas, in a little bit of a shambles. Now they had to pick up and—not rebuild, but start building, cleaning up what had been left in the aftermath of war—bitter local fights over forcing someone to tear down a fire hazard or to bring it up to code. And that was when we organized the city of Hawthorne, briefly. It was a temporary deal, and we knew it.

But Hawthorne was smaller than Babbitt, still, at the end of the war in total population. Babbitt governed entirely by the Navy; they had their regulations. We had none in Hawthorne, and that was one of the—I repeat—one of the reasons for incorporating our city, to see if we could clean it up. We knew it would be a costly venture, and it was. And all the experts in local government, fiscal and accounting and financing, be damned. Just try it sometime. We did. We weakened the financial structure of the county in so doing, and we weren't well or wealthy enough to continue as a city; but that was one of the reasons for doing it, and I wanted to get that in there.

We did make some strides in cleaning up. We got a building code in (hard to

enforce), a few cleanup drives; and eventually land use planning came in after we had disincorporated the city, and a few things of that kind. But through the years I've seen it really improve, and lookin' back now, all of the improvement in this little community and nice new homes—I could show you a number of 'em—all were done on citizens' initiative. And all the land use planning, the regulation, supervision, inspection had very little to do with it, and still has today.

When [the] Korean War broke out in '50, it was under the "Fanny May" program—the Federal National Mortgage Association—that 150 houses were authorized for Hawthorne to replace the Babbitt housing that was now bein' moved out. One hundred and fifty flattops jam-packed together and sold for \$8,200. In typical government fashion—it was a government project—they were not permitted to sell until all 150 were completed. Well, it took about three years to get the 150 completed, red tape and the like. First National had part of the interim underwriting, the old Nevada Bank of Commerce, the other.

When it was all done and they had carried the thing to completion, they bailed out and sold their paper back to "Fanny May," as we called it, which is just good banking procedure, I guess. Then the government suddenly discovered that those low-cost rental units for munitions workers were not moving and couldn't sell, so to speak; and now they were talkin' about ending the Korean War, so what do we do with the 150? After a little revision, modifying, and rescinding of all these federal orders, they allowed non-depot employees, non-munitions workers in search of low-cost housing to buy homes. And the first twenty-five or fifty that were occupied by either people who were working uptown, not connected with the depot—some business people, some professional people. Well, they

saw a good thing—buy at \$8,200, even though it was a flattop and kind of cramped. Most of them today, if you drive through there, have hip roofs and dens.

And from that initial investment—that start—the people in the community have made some beautiful houses out of 'em by spending far more than the initial cost. And today, those who are not in business or employed in town, the greater number of the occupants are retired Naval personnel—not the acting munitions workers, as they were called. But today it stands as a very fine little development, but, I repeat, all the hip roofs, all the addition of dens, and all were done by the individuals who decided they wanted something a little better, once they had the authority to get their name on the paper.

Likewise, just to the south of that lake view—the Mt. Grant addition, as it was called—county land was thrown open, and different local people purchased their lots and today are still building fine homes. It's become quite a retirement community, like a mini-Sun City or something, but with a lot of individual freedom—just a few blocks west and south of where we're sitting. We're quite proud of it. 'course, in the meantime, many fine homes were built in the sections scattered throughout the town; I'm not sayin' it's all concentrated in one area. But that is one of the things that I wanted to get in there.

And maybe here is what I should say during the final rites or something, but before I forget it, that is the future of Hawthorne—the fine retirement community opportunity that we have here, and the people realize it. People have come from every state in the union, and they're happy to remain; they like it—our climate and all. And it's kind of pleasing that when we have these cutbacks at the Naval depot (which we're going through a very traumatic period now for the third time),

that we don't think in terms of the next war—as God forbid, will not have, but we know that there'd be wars, more wars, and Hawthorne'll play a very important part in it. But it's the retirement factor, the peaceful living. And somewhere, wherever you can put that in the book, that was my swan song [chuckles], but I better say it now and save the time later.

Now I've skimmed over from the start of the depot, the building, the hectic wartimes; and those were all in generalities, I admit, but [in] case later on if I forget something, that I'll put it in right here that we went down rock bottom again after the end of the Korean War. And as today, now no one wants to spend money on defense or military—never any money available for maintenance and overhaul.

That's the sad part of our country. When we have an explosion—we've had a few out here—they'll spend a young fortune investigating. Teams fly from Washington; they fly from this area, that area, try to reconstruct the case, and come up with a volume of recommendations to guard against future recurrences. And always, when these things happen, is when the demand is great to keep the bombs rolling, keep the ammunition moving, and follow all the safety rules you can, but remember, “we have a deadline to meet”—this seems to be the general pattern. Then when the shutdown comes in peacetime (and I know I'm repeating, but then the government repeats, too; they've done it every time), not a damn dime for maintenance, overhaul or new equipment.

I think [of] the people who've worked out here, the civilians—men and particularly the women. When those women go on the bomb line in those white overalls and put those doctor-or-nurse-type caps over their hair so that none of the particles of explosive get in there, if you could ever see some of them

workin' there right alongside the men, they've got to be among our best citizens because when—they'll take on that type of work. And very little consideration is given when the cutbacks come, as the years *they've* given to civil service, the years that *they've* put in for the government. It's rather a sad thing.

Somewhere along the road there should be a better balance in this whole system of the peaks and the valleys, I call it, because—I mention those men and those women—there're certain areas we don't like to talk too much about it 'cause you're always frightened about what the other fellow learns—across the pond or somewhere. There's a couple of areas out in there where they're using equipment manufactured during World War I, and I mean—we're not talking about, say, a lift in a service station, hydraulic lift to lift the car and grease it; some areas we're talkin' about some pretty hot stuff.

So there is the general run-on on the depot, unless we go back into specific incidents or some unusual thing about it. And I should have been writin' these down alongside you, 'cause now I'm beginnin' to reach the point where I've forgotten what I told you.

The closest analogy I can make to that is a simple little thing, and I have it somewhere there in the files; I've laughed about it. But it was a former Naval petty officer, chief pharmacist's mate, who had been stationed here (now out in the Pacific) who subscribed to our newspaper, and we sent it to him. An' he'd been on Guam for a while, I know, and then everything has to switch over to Fleet Post Office (FPO), APO (the Army Post Office), San Francisco. That's the way everything had to be changed, and you didn't keep up with them that way. But he sent in a renewal for his subscription to our little paper, and a short note—greeting and the like—on

that old tissue paper that they used during the war to keep down the weight of the paper when it got on the plane. And he started the letter this way: "Well, I'm still safe and have been well and now at this outpost in the Pacific," and no indication whatsoever where he might be. And the stamp of the censor and signature of the lieutenant was up in one corner; on the envelope there was a censor's button (I'll try to find that envelope and show it to you someday—it'd been censored on the envelope). It said nothing that he shouldn't say—cleared the letter—but he was renewing his subscription, and he did so with a money order. The money order was drawn on the post office at "Pango Pango," as they call it—Samoa. I call it Pago Pago [laughter]. He had to go to the post office in Samoa to get the money order, or didn't, I don't know! We laughed [more laughter]. I saved it as a souvenir. I says [laughing], "Oh what security we have!"

I think we're just about up to date except for tellin' you why we're not up to date on knowing when, how, and when the Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot will ever be actually or fully operating as an Army ammunition plant. I don't want to be cynical about the Army taking over the Naval Ammunition Depot because in many ways I believe it will be better for Hawthorne.

The now, last Navy captain we have here concurs in that thought. He thinks that we, as a community and the area, might be better off under Army if for no other reason than the Navy is a little more water oriented—under water, on the surface of the water and, of course, up in the air—carriers sending planes in the air. Shore stations, if they're on an ocean front, like Norfolk or Boston—Naval shipyard; Bremerton, Washington; San Diego—they are important to them because they are more or less Navy communities. Inland stations such

as Hawthorne NAD; McAlester, Oklahoma; and others—in the forty seven years I’ve watched the depot operate here, and the Navy “on board,” as they call it, take an interest in the depot and the town—but Washington, D.C. is another place.

To verify what I’ve been sayin’ for years, that the Navy neglects its stations, shore stations, in peacetime, just less than a month ago on Armed Forces Day, which was May twenty-first, the general who will be in command of these Army ammunition plants (is in command now, but will assume ours) was here from Rock Island, Illinois. And he frankly said that he was surprised that he had met high level officials in the Navy Department, both military and civilian, who had never heard of Hawthorne, Nevada. And during World War II, Korea, Vietnam, it was one of the major production plants to keep the show going.

The Army, I think, keeps closer tab on the shore stations because the Army is land oriented. And whether it be an arsenal, or an Army ammunition plant, or a fort, training center, Army War College—they just follow the inventory check system a little better, I believe.

Now, as to say what was better, this is in their thinking. We don’t know as to—let’s say—the only way work load would be increased would be through consolidation with some other stations. Actually Hawthorne could absorb Herlong with no strain at all; it’s merely a storage depot. See, they do not have the bomb lines, not [the] production as Hawthorne has. I’m not out to grab Herlong, either, but the impact in its immediate trading center area of Reno would be insignificant—four or five hundred employees. One hotel employs far more than that. Whereas something like that added to Hawthorne, would have a real impact on the upward scale.

But, so I say I’m not knockin’ the Army, but unfortunately the Army is government, the Navy is government, the Defense Department is government; and we have had more damned bureaus, divisions, departments involved in this transfer which is supposed to promote economy and efficiency—that’s a great expression. The Army is actually acquiring two and a half ammunition depots—Hawthorne, Nevada; McAlester, Oklahoma; and one-half of Crane, Indiana, if they get it. And that’s still in dispute because there’s a mixture of ammunition depot and research development center; and the Navy maintains a large one there, far more employees than we have here ’cause they like to be near the big cities, and then a couple of small satellite units. But in the belief that a Single Service Management program (and that’s what it’s called—SSM) would eliminate duplication like that health outfit I was pointing out to you, you eliminate duplication by building another one, and it’s hard—I just don’t understand that yet.

The Army seems very pleased in getting it, but they acknowledge, too, that they didn’t ask for this. This came from the Defense Department that we created after World War II. They said, “Well, there’s too much rivalry, too much of the friction, too much duplication among the services. So we’ll create an umbrella over ’em—the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force.” Well hell, that’s one of the most confused agencies we have—and now is the Department of Defense—. And we often wonder if they’re capable of running [chuckling] the other three branches of the service.

One example of that it’s just not a simplified system, when the initial move was made last year October first, the preliminary move, and starting to phase in, as they class it, the Army pointed out that they have never been engaged in the business of producing

underwater demolitions, as a fancy working they use—torpedoes, mines, depth charges, certain underwater rocket systems. So that remained with the Navy. But since the Navy is giving up Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot, it was transferred to the Navy mine station, I think they call it, at Keyport, Washington. But Keyport, Washington, not having the facilities for certain work, as does Hawthorne NAD, Keyport arranged tenant status for—presently under Hawthorne NAD, and then they will be a tenant of the Army—the landlord—to retain the facility located at Hawthorne, Nevada.

Since October first of 1976, we have twenty-one employees at this depot, who had been employees of Hawthorne NAD, whose employment here was terminated as of October first of last year. Their paychecks come from Keyport, Washington, but they work in the same location they've been workin' for years. This is part of this government—now I've given you the actual cases. It was so odd that the captain of the Navy here wrote a little article for his own station newspaper [chuckling]—said, "We lost twenty-one employees, and we still have twenty-one bodies walkin' around." But they were removed, and now their paychecks come in from Keyport—these twenty-one people that have worked here for years.

I have—I won't say purloined and somewhat along the Pentagon Papers idea—but not wantin' to be Ellsberg and sell 'em for profit and not wantin' to be like the *New York Times* and printin' 'em which I don't do, I have read page after page of what it requires to transfer something—the action required. It's under what they call the "Milestone Events for Transfer of Command from the Navy to the Army." There's one I wanted to get in here that really gave me a good laugh. The theory is that, [as I] say, these people already have

the ability (same word as "capability," but it's shortened) to do a job or they wouldn't have been hired—. But now, "Developments in mid-fiscal year of '78 training plan—provide classroom training for Navy supervisory personnel, identify areas where training is required, determine method and number of personnel needing training, rewrite training and employee development instructions, conduct analysis of training survey findings, update employee training records."

This one also struck me—well, just struck me, put it that way—that all the time they're always so demanding and careful about inventories and we've got computerized data processing and keeping of records, been goin' on for years, but now suddenly, "Inventory Navy vehicles, identify Navy PA requirements, identify Army PA requirements, identify Navy vehicle requirements, identify Army vehicle requirements," and so on with space requirements. My understanding was that they have a pretty good idea, or have had for years, how many vehicles it actually takes to operate this depot, whether it's under the Navy or the Army; but it seems suddenly that everything from vehicles to space requirements that there is a difference. We hope [chuckling] they do a good job; we appreciate having had the Navy around all these years. But as long as we're under Washington, so shall it ever be.

NEVADA POLITICS

NEVADA POLITICS, 1920S

I previously mentioned about Fred Balzar, Morley Griswold coming to town, and how we made a few extra bucks. The story that would start in Tonopah, carried over into Hawthorne, insofar as I'm concerned—was the establishment in the late twenties, after Balzar had become governor (took office in '27), of a division point for the state Highway Department—the Fifth Division; there'd been four in the state. And they set the new one up at Tonopah, a few old frame buildings or a corrugated garage. And the man who was named to become division engineer was John C. Rodder, from Hawthorne.

John Rodder was an engineering graduate from Stanford who'd come to Nevada (what time I don't know)—but located in Hawthorne in the twenties, dabbling in mining and general in this area, and not doing too well financially. He lived directly behind where you're now taking your notes—one lot to the north. And that building is located next door to the home of Governor Fred Balzar,

prior to his moving to Carson City; they were very close friends. Knowing Rodder's qualifications, that he needed a job, Balzar selected Rodder to become the division engineer.

The group in Tonopah—say “the group,” the Republican wheels—and those who wanted to land jobs with the new division point were not mildly furious, but real uptight, to use the modern expression, that they would go outside of town to pick a division engineer. The apparent favorite was a man named Tom Eastman. Huge man—been on the police force in Tonopah. And he was named superintendent under Rodder. But that didn't satisfy the “Tonopah group,” as I called 'em. They held an indignation meeting, maybe several, but at least one or two, in the *Bonanza* office again—that's where the indignation meeting was held—when they were going to lay the law down to Balzar and tell him it was a no-go.

Balzar apparently ignored their complaints, and even a formal protest by the Republican central committee of Nye County. I cannot

tell you the time lag or the gap, but it wasn't too long after, that Rodder and Eastman engaged in an argument in front of the police station in Tonopah about the highway work and the operation of the division point. And Eastman hit Rodder and knocked him down on the sidewalk in front of the police station in Tonopah.

Rodder was a man, oh, about six-foot tall, weighed probably not over a hundred and forty pounds. Eastman was somewhat over six-foot and weighed well over two hundred pounds. I got a little ahead of the story there, because just before that incident between Rodder and Eastman, Rodder told me himself—after I'd moved to Hawthorne—his view of it. As a kid I heard all this wrangling going on, and later I talked to Balzar personally about it. "One thing," I said, "I want to get clear—how all this all happened."

And Balzar told me the story this way: With these protests and complaints coming in—that they sent a delegation to see him in Carson City protesting the appointment of Rodder, that he told them that the division point, if it were in Tonopah, Rodder would be the superintendent. If it were in Goldfield, Rodder would be the superintendent. Now they could accept Rodder and have the division point in Tonopah, or they could forget Rodder in Tonopah and for get the division point, too, was the way he told it. He said he actually had Sam Durkee, the Highway engineer, bring out what appeared to be some blueprints and all of the alternate plan for putting the division point at Goldfield. Well, at that, they threatened Balzar that if he felt that way about it that they would provide primary opposition for him when he came up for reelection in 1930. And he told him in his own rough way, to "fire their best shot"—or whatever words they used at that time. They returned to Tonopah, and that, not to repeat the whole story, is when

Eastman encountered Rodder, the argument developed, and he struck him.

Now I'm going back to what Balzar told me about the follow-up of *that* incident: That Rodder figured that he just would never do well up in Tonopah—it wasn't worth the gamble. So he called Balzar and wanted to resign, and Balzar refused to let him resign. He said, "I want you to be on the job in the morning." And, he says, "Then Eastman shows up, fire him." And, he says, "If his hits you again," he says, "he'll have me to hit because I'll be down there the minute I hear about it."

And Balzar, a big man, rugged, former sheriff here in Mineral County, would back down for no man—meant what he said. Rodder did fire Eastman and stayed on; Rodder continued as the division engineer until Governor Kirman was elected in '34 and took office in '35. An' bein' a political plum, why, Rodder was replaced at *that* time, but never by his own Republican party.

And the follow-up: the Republican central committee was not bluffing; they did intend to get opposition for Balzar. They kicked out the name of Tracy Fairchild of Elko; I recall hearing that in their discussions, but apparently Senator Fairchild told 'em he wanted no part of it. The next name that I heard them talking was of a Dick Cowles, cattleman at Wadsworth, they said. And apparently they were fully determined because Cowles did file against Balzar in the Republican primary in 1930. And I think, if I'm not mistaken, I think E. B. Roberts got into that race, too. There were three of 'em.

Balzar won easily over both of them, won an easy victory for the Republican nomination—renomination, put it that way. But that's how rough and tumble those old boys were in those days, even within their party. The various groups, the geographical

location, could have an effect on it. But that was the story of the division point stayin' in Tonopah—because Rodder stayed as engineer; otherwise today we might have a division point in Goldfield and not in Tonopah.

Now I'm trying to collect my thoughts which are on those late events of the 1920s, and even though they overlapped here into Hawthorne, as I say. (Incidentally, my discussion with Balzar, I think I mentioned, was after I'd come to Hawthorne. He came here one day to deliver a memorial address. He came to Hawthorne frequently because his mother was living here then. In fact, she predeceased him only by a short period, if I remember, not too long.

And still on the Tonopah kick, I remember, oh, the campaign of 1928, when Booth was all out for Clark J. Guild, District Judge Clark J. Guild, in his race against Judge Sanders, Booth's mortal enemy. In fact his precocious son, who now is a prominent attorney in Reno, served on the Board of Regents for a brief period, Clark Guild, Jr. [chuckling]. Our friendship, up until the time of Judge Guild's death and presently with Clark, Jr., started.

That was another day I was sweeping out the newspaper office very slowly, but I had moved the broom very deftly and had a nice pile of dirt over near the stove where I could pick it up with the dust pan. And while Judge Guild and Booth were in great conference, young Junior, then about eight years, I believe, couldn't resist puttin' his toe into the center of my nice pile of dirt and scattering it all over the floor. If his dad hadn't been there, I'd've rapped him over the head with the broomstick; but discretion being the better part of valor, I went over and put the broom up and started to walk out and go on home.

Booth stopped me; he said (always called me "kid"), "Hey kid, you haven't finished sweepin' the floor yet."

I said, "Oh yes, I finished," but I said, "he wants to sweep it," and I pointed to Junior Guild.

I said, "He wasn't satisfied with the way I had done it," and I said, "he put it back where it was—all over the floor [chuckling]."

And Judge Guild made Junior grab the broom and sweep it, and I think that's what threw us so close together in later life!—that our first meeting had [laughter] just a few sparks flying in it.

In that same '28 election, Sam Platt—how that man could be so deceived by the people of his own party, I will never know—but he was the perennial candidate for the U.S. Senate when they couldn't find anyone else to run; made some very close races. But there again, I heard Bill Booth and Mark Bradshaw arguin' over who was responsible to get Sam Platt from Tonopah to Goldfield when he was out on his tour. Booth had an old 1924 Dodge, but had never fully mastered the driving art; he couldn't drive him over without putting it in a ditch. Bradshaw didn't *want* to take Platt, as we found out, an' any number of other Republicans. And it was then when I first sensed that a little bit of bigotry can be a dangerous thing. I heard reference that sometimes they would call him Sam, sometimes they'd call him Platt, and other times call him "the little Jew." And this was the people who supposedly—I'm not referring to Booth now, but in different discussions I would hear this, and I'd kind of record it in the back of my mind. And I can sense there, it wasn't because his opponent Key Pittman claimed Tonopah as residency that so many Republicans would lean. And, of course, you had right at that peak, the Al Smith-Hoover race with all of its religious overtones. An' a lot of—well, might as well call it—bigotry—bias, bigotry, intolerance surfaced at that time. And of course, it was largely over the Al Smith-Hoover race.

Booth, the die-hard Republican, was with Hoover for that purpose, no doubt about it. If Smith had been a Republican, I think even Booth would have taken Smith, Catholic or not. But, it was then that I realized that they had organized—they didn't call 'em "cells;" I knew the word, too, somethin' like the "grand kleagle" or "head mogul" and all—but a unit of the Klan in Tonopah, as they had throughout most of Nevada at that time. [It] probably dated back to the McAdoo-Smith marathon of 1924 Democratic national convention because by '28, they were pretty well organized.

And at that time coming from a lifelong Democratic family, and certainly having no aversion to Al Smith because he was a Catholic, being a Catholic myself, I probably leaned more to the Democratic party than to the Republican party. Although, I was impressed with people like Balzar, Morley Griswold, and to me, they were real leaders. And that had some effect on my registering first time as a Republican and remaining that way.

But, just listening to Democrats—"the party of the people," as they called it, the party of the poor people—around Tonopah stating that—"Well, there's times you have to put your country ahead of your party. And it's not that I have anything against Al Smith's religion, he just doesn't have the education." And I saw more Democrats flop over on the basis of his "lack of education." Suddenly they became education-minded like hell.

So four years later, some of those same Democrats—not only in Tonopah, but I hear 'em up in Reno and elsewhere, that I knew that *no way* could they support Al Smith because he happened to go to the wrong church—but now they were blamin' Hoover for everything from a flood—if a woman had a miscarriage, it was Hoover's fault; everybody that was out

of work, Hoover ordered them personally to be put out of work. And there was a gag at the time that they used. It was humorous, but it was used against Hoover: that the greatest engineer in the world, the only man who could "ditch, dam, and drain a nation in four years"—and they'd laugh and chuckle about it.

And my response to that was "Yes." And I said, "According to all those Democrats now who are all rallied around Roosevelt, that Hoover is an entirely different man with all his education, an' was so superior to Al Smith, could now be so unqualified for the presidency four years later!" I said, "There's just too much hypocrisy there for me." That was one of the things that convinced me that I more or less wanted to register Republican because of Fred Balzar, largely, who was one of my idols. But seeing the turnaround that they gave Herbert Hoover, I convinced myself that the first vote I had in 1932, first vote for a president, would be cast for Herbert Hoover, even knowing that he didn't stand a Chinaman's chance in hell of making it.

We've discussed just a few of the political shenanigans of some of the characters in the Tonopah of the twenties. In my close associations to the *Bonanza*, naturally I dwelled almost entirely on Republicans, such as Booth, Bradshaw, Keenan, Boak, maybe a few others. I frankly am at a loss to say much about the Democratic side, or whatever their internal problems might have been in Tonopah in those days, because I could take only one course at a time. But they must have had some differences along the road because the Democratic primaries seemed to be always loaded with candidates for each office and fighting for that nomination—some of our very prominent attorneys, that I can recall.

I believe it was in 1922 when the district attorney Frank Dunn, the Democrat,

challenged Judge Mark Averill for the district judgeship, it left the office of district attorney open. And a young attorney just home from Stanford Law School, “back home in Tonopah,” as you say, Joseph T. Murphy, won the nomination. And I’m sure it must have been a very close race because I could hear people discussing others who might likely win. And I believe in that one primary, in addition to Murphy, that Judge Forman, as they called him, the grandfather of the present district judge in Washoe County—I’m sure he was one of the candidates. Ryland C. Taylor, later district judge in Las Vegas, Clark County, possibly was in that same race.

But, I cite that to give an example of the top-notch, first-string attorneys that we had in a little town the size of Tonopah, and the “heavy timber” that was actually seeking the position of district attorney, which in later years, older attorneys usually frown upon or turn away from. That was only one of the many races the Democrats in that year, ’22, seemed to predominate, not only state level, but in our county.

In fact that was the year that, as I recall in whispering and the rumbling about the cashier in one of the banks allegedly makin’ the remark in the post office, following the general election when most of those Democrats bein’ of Catholic faith were elected, that possibly they should go up and take the American flag down and put the cross in the courthouse. That was one—a Wednesday—and I’m no authority on this other because, after all, I was only a kid at the time, but I talked about it later. And the one that probably filled me in more accurately than any was Minnie Blair when I talked to her in Fallon just a few years ago.

Minnie’s husband, Ernie, was the assistant cashier at the bank at the time, and as she told me the story, she and their children had

finally gotten away from Tonopah for a week for a vacation. Vacations were never on set schedule in those days, and when you got time off, you made the most of it. They’d gone to Bishop Creek, fishing. And they’d had just three or four days in, when a courier, as she called it, came flying over the hill, located her husband and the family—but particularly her husband. He said, “Ernie, you’ve got to get back to Tonopah. We have trouble.”

And she said to me, she said, “You have the story fairly well straight, Jack; what you’ve told me, you do have straight—not all the details.”

She says it was closer to bein’ a run on the bank than you could ever imagine—and that would be about a Thursday. They got home late on Friday; someone was covering in the bank, apparently, because the cashier of the bank the following Monday morning was given an assignment in another town in Nevada, some distance from Tonopah. And Ernie Blair had to take over and help keep the waters on even keel, if he could, and try to put down this alleged run. It was just one of those—not a slip of the tongue—but offhanded remarks, made possibly because of a little disappointment, feeling of defeat in the election, that a person can make, that can result in some real extensive ramifications (a polite way of saying it, I believe). In other words, it can raise hell. So that was one little incident that involved the Democratic side, through no fault of their own. Their extensive victory almost caused a banking panic in Tonopah.

During all this period that the men appeared to be doing the greater part of the feuding, the women of Tonopah and Nye County were not totally inactive, or unliberated. As I’ve discussed with you, and you’ve pointed out to me, also, that Nye County has been very generous in support of women for public office.

When I first moved to Tonopah in 1919, payin' no attention to politics in particular, an' really in any way—but I did become cognizant of women engaging in politics. I was started in school in Tonopah in the third grade—the third week. At that time there was a second grade teacher, and I'm certain it was Jennie A. Currieux; and she took leave of absence, as a Democrat, to oppose Lida B. Gilbert, the incumbent auditor-recorder.

It seems that she had been given some encouragement by another teacher, either of the first or second grade, Ruth Averill, who in 1920 had been elected to the state assembly. Well, if memory serves me correctly, Jennie Currieux opposed Mrs. Gilbert twice, each time unsuccessful, in spite of the strong Democratic trend there in Nye County.

Mrs. Gilbert, on several occasions, was the lone Republican in the courthouse, but virtually undefeatable, and certainly no man ever -ran the risk of attempting to unseat her. It's one of those—I won't say phenomena, but strange twists of political fate that, to repeat, the Democrats seemed to have everything in their grip except that one position held by Mrs. Gilbert, the Republican. And the other, all through the twenties and after that—the office of sheriff by Bill Thomas, who, because of his Socialist registration, had to run as an Independent since his party was no longer a recognized party in those years.

I'm lookin' at notes now that I made two years back so that I could be prepared to wrangle with some of these "women libbers" and ERA evangelists. I just want to prove to them that in the time I was a youth, why, women might not have heard of the word "liberation" in relation to their own status in life, but they certainly weren't sitting at home baking bread, sewing all the time. That those who wished to seek public office knew it was their right and they exercised it without

benefit of constitutional amendment or any public meeting.

Then in 1922 Louise Hays was elected to the assembly from Nye County, and I recall Miss Hays had taught school, ant then whether that was her married name or not I do not know, but I used to deliver papers to Miss Hays later—not too much attention was given to that. She was a very intelligent lady, schoolteacher; and schoolteachers were really looked up to in those days. I'm not sayin' today they are not, but, they were just a different breed of teachers than we have today where they're so well organized—so many of 'em; the universities turn 'em out in mass production. Some got there by benefit of GI Bill, or for some other reason or government grant, where in those days, these wonderful ladies chose to make teaching their career. And we admired them so much for it, as I said earlier.

Then in '24 *two* women were elected from Nye County—Mayme Schweble and Florence Swasey. Mrs. Swasey operated a rooming house, as they called it, two-story from the street, almost directly behind the Mizpah Hotel, but a little bit north, but on Water Street.

And let me interject something there; I think I mentioned it earlier, when I say, "directly behind this place or that place on another street"—Tonopah had no alleys, all streets. The front of one building faced the back of another, including outhouses. Well it was not laid out; it just fell in place. And as an aside there, we often kidded that the Saint Patrick's Street started at the Presbyterian Church and ended in the red-light district [laughter]. But that was something else.

But back to these politicians. Mrs. Swasey—I have a photograph of her son Lloyd when he played on the last football team that Tonopah had (1920), for many, many

years. He later became a doctor, I believe in Colorado. An' some of the same members of that team I know—my eldest brother—Procter Hug, was the captain of the team, Procter Hug, Sr. I just say that in passing. Mrs. Swasey was a widow at the time, supporting her son, sending him through school.

Mayme Schweble's husband was a mining man—a very pleasant, unassuming, almost unliberated little old fellow because Mayme called all the shots in that family. I knew because her son was in the same class as I, and for that reason we passed out cards for Mayme Schweble in her election campaign. Liked her very much, but she was somewhat domineering.

Following the session, both women and some of the other delegation—Nye had four in those days—I don't know about the men, but I recall the women catchin' a little hell for somethin' over a labor bill, and that they'd better not come back and try to run again. An' it wasn't because they were females, but because of the voting pattern.

And, I think, during that same session there was a fella named Smith from Lincoln County, served in '25, and he and Mrs. Swasey were married. She later moved to Caliente—Mrs. Florence Smith. I believe his name was Willard Smith, and he might have been sheriff later on, I'm not certain. An' then Mayme Schweble did not return as far as Tonopah, but she located in Hawthorne and lived in Hawthorne for several years. Her son died just two or three years ago. Her grandson is now serving on the Nevada Highway Patrol, was stationed in Hawthorne, presently stationed in Fallon (noting that "presently" is 1976). He was born in Gabbs. see him quite frequently, and he has recently inquired of me if I could help find out something about the history of his grandmother—wants to know more about her political activity! An' I said, "The only way

we can do, Jack" (as we call him), "is someday, if we're in Tonopah, we'll dig out the files, the old *Tonopah Bonanza* and *Times*, at the time of her campaign—whatever report they had on the Session and any comment, editorial or otherwise, that was made. That's about all we can do."

And then, of course, two years later—even though Mrs. Schweble and Mrs. Swasey were not around to be candidates for reelection—Nye again sent another lady as part of the delegation, Ethel McGuire. And my understanding was that Mrs. McGuire taught school in Tonopah in her earlier years, but not during the time I was going to school there. I knew her son Dick quite well—a little older than I, quite a basketball player, played on some of those top-notch Tonopah teams, and very active, very talkative, but a real go-getter. I think he finished the University of Nevada [as] a mining engineer (I'm not certain), but he located in Ely, Nevada, and spent the rest of his days in Ely, died a year or two ago—Dick McGuire.

And Nye County in later years sent at least one representative to the state assembly, Lois Washburn, but that was after I had moved to Hawthorne. I knew nothing about her until I had met her at the legislature,

Now I spoke of those going to the legislature, but one of the big victories for women in public office, winning public office, again came out of Tonopah, and again out of the *Tonopah Bonanza*. Our bookkeeper, Eva Hatton, was a widow with two daughters to raise, very capable in office work and all, was suggested as a candidate for clerk of the supreme court in 1926. Well, like everyone else livin' from payday to payday, she didn't know how she'd pay for the printing of the tickets. Well, the office offered to pay for that, and some of the office crew chipped in to get her a little money—the only way she could

campaign the state. An' whatever might be said about the male chauvinists lookin' down their nose at the women in public office, the Republicans had a well-organized campaign that year, in spite of an almost disastrous state convention when the feuding among different factions left the convention somewhat shattered, as I was told.

The only one they could agree upon for state chairman, as a compromise candidate, was the sheriff out of Mineral County who had served in the state senate, was well known—again it was Fred Balzar. And because of the tremendous job Balzar did in holding the factions together past the convention stage, at the close of it they decided he possibly was the best candidate that the Republicans could produce to give any kind of competition to the incumbent governor, Jim Scrugham.

It was generally talked about, even in Republican circles, that Balzar would be a token candidate, but hopefully could make a strong showing against Scrugham. And as events proved, everyone underestimated Fred Balzar. Once he got into it, he got into it to win, and he *did* with a very unusual upset over Jim Scrugham who had been a very active governor, and not too controversial. But nevertheless, Balzar won that.

Well, Balzar and the very popular and personable Morley Griswold (he must have been only in his middle thirties when he was chosen for lieutenant governor to go along with Balzar)—they put together the caravan system of touring the entire state. All the candidates raised some funds, and that is how Eva got to make the tour of the entire state, thanks to the men at the top of the ticket, realizing she had nothing in the way of financial contribution, but a lot in the way of attractiveness—physically and as a capable candidate—and she went all the way and won the office. I haven't checked this out; I don't

know—I won't say first state office—but I think she was the first female holder of a major state office—full time.

Now I do have some notes in front of me that say that in 116 that Edna Baker, the Republican, won for the Board of Regents—in 1918 was elected a regent when they'd gone nonpartisan. And there was a woman candidate for secretary of state, Republican, lost that year—Louise Ellis. And of course, Anne Martin, she became the great flag waver for the cause and was running quite frequently, but did not make it. And then in 1920 Delle Boyd was chosen as a presidential elector, and Anne Martin tried it again. And then in '24 Mrs. Frank Humphrey was a presidential elector. Nineteen twenty-six [was] when Eva won hers. Eva won reelection, incidentally, in 1930. Eva defeated a Christine W. Clark; I don't recall her at all. And Carrie Devine lost to George Russell for state treasurer, but that was a strong Republican year, as you understand. And, of course, in the same year that Eva won the first term in '26—a strong Republican year—Clara Cunningham, a Republican, lost to Ed Malley for state treasurer.

So it's not as though the women just appeared on the scene in recent years. And you could go on down the list: the record shows that Mildred Bray went in for superintendent of public instruction; Oline Stewart lost in a race for treasurer, in 1938; and Anna Wardin, a woman, defeated George Wingfield for regent of the University. And that's almost forty years ago. And, of course, Mildred stayed in till '46. Margaret Brodigan was elected [state supreme court] clerk; Molly Magee, a regent now—several women are serving on it, say, in the past fifteen years.

And heavens, we've had women runnin' for Congress before, too: Harriet G. Spann and Harriet Arentz, the widow of—

NEVADA POLITICS, 1930S

Starting with 1934, I recall that was the first time I met Archie Grant from Las Vegas—very pleasing, pleasant fellow; and he had jumped into the race with five or six others for the Democratic nomination for governor. It was a cinch that some Democrat would be elected, and everybody it seemed wanted the office. The Reno newspapers—or the *Gazette*, I should say—not the newspapers—the Reno *Gazette* and the Sanford family very close to Dick Kirman were convinced that he was the man, and that's when they made the famous crossover from their hard-line Republican policies to insist that Richard Kit-man, the banker, be the next governor. But it didn't come all that easily. Harley [A.] Harmon had been campaigning for that office for four years.

I first net him in 1930 as district attorney of Clark County, and he would make trips over these dirt roads and across the desert takin' three days to get from Las Vegas to Reno; and for virtually four solid years, Harley Harmon campaigned for the Democratic nomination for governor. And it wasn't all that easy for Kit-man. I do believe that Harley Harmon would have been the Democratic nominee had not Archie Grant entered in the late weeks to divide that vote in southern Nevada which was not so great then. I know there were others from Reno helpin' to divide it; I don't recall if—well, I think John Cooper, the former mayor—we could look those up, but the real race was between Kirman and Harmon. And it was much closer I think than most people realized it would be. Harmon lost the race to Kirman by 484 votes statewide, and it was quite a blow to Harley Harmon after campaignin' for four years.

And while on that subject, it was rather ironical that losing that one so closely

to Kirman with six in the race including Archie Grant, as I had said, was when Kirman announced he did not intend to seek reelection in '38; it appeared that Harmon would be the choice of the party. But that, of course, was changed around when the Pittman-McCarran feud developed to a point where a just comparatively well-known judge out Elko, E. P. Carville, who had been named U.S. Attorney, was blocked for reappointment. It more or less made an underdog out of Carville. So this time it was Carville and Harmon with Charlie Richards, a perennial runner for some office, in the race also, and that went down to the wire with Carville edging Harmon by 2700 votes.

Some amusing sidelights of that—I thought several Catholic priests in Nevada would almost come to blows with that race. Harley Harmon was just admired and respected and had some of the priests openly campaigning for him, particularly in the southern part of the state. Harmon was not a Catholic; his wife was, but they just loved the guy. Well, of course Ted Carville, bein' a Catholic, he found some support among the "turned collars" up north; and I heard at least two arguments between priests and I thought they'd come to blows, one a staunch Harmon supporter, the other a staunch Carville supporter. And it was probably the first time I'd ever seen Catholic priests taking an active part in political campaigning, not in the pulpit, but out in the street, a barroom or anywhere else. But believe me, they really chose up sides, and Bishop Gorman had a hard time quieting those boys down after the election. There was some real -ill feeling within the clergy.

Another man whose name seldom was mentioned (I haven't seen too much of it in most of the Nevada history books that were written or that had been written), who

was the first to suggest Ted Carville to enter the race for governor, at least the first to my knowledge—and I knew he'd been doin' real careful, cautious work because of the Hatch Act—and it was the postmaster of Reno, Bill [William] Kinnikin. Bill Kinnikin had been a real trooper in the McCarran forces in '32. He was a pleasant, intelligent, articulate, persuasive young man, and, [as] I say, very convincing. He talked to me one time going up the steps of the post office in Reno about the possibility of givin' some assistance to this fine gentleman from Elko, Ted Carville, who'd just been tossed out as U.S. Attorney. It was Bill's contention that Carville paid the price because of his participation in the prosecution of [William D.] Graham and [James] McKay. It was just as plain as that.

Bill's own appointment had an amusing side. He told me that—I do not recall whether the other front-runner for the appointment of postmaster in 1933 was Pete [Peter C.] Petersen at that time; he did have it later, staunch McCarran supporter. But in seeing that McCarran was having a very difficult time making up his mind, he wanted something for both of these fellas, and the postmaster was the plum. And Bill Kinnikin said that just on a hunch he drove out to the McCarran ranch and talked to Pat McCarran's mother [Margaret Shay McCarran] as she was sittin' on the porch with her corncob pipe. And he explained to her the—some might call it a dilemma that Pat was in, and he'd still be loyal to him whether he got the appointment or not. And he didn't want to pursue it in the matter of influencing the new Senator, but just wondered if possibly Mrs. McCarran could add a thought or two. And he said that after he got the appointment and all, that McCarran said to him one time, "Damn it, the next time come to me directly and don't use my mother's muscle on me!" And he

said that McCarran told Bill, he says, "She didn't discuss any of the ramifications of the campaign or qualifications of posting the mail or distributing the mail."

He said that McCarran (this is Kinnikin tellin' me—that McCarran told him)—his mother said, "Patsy, Billy Kinnikin is my boy. I want to see him in the post office." And Bill Kinnikin was always proud of the fact that he used the right judgement in goin' to call on the little Irish lady out there at the ranch. Kinnikin, as I say, was a much stronger force in these political races of the time although had to be very careful in his campaigning being under the Hatch Act. And they were not nearly as stringent then as now, but still in all he wanted to keep it on a high level, just as his successor Pete Petersen would watch his Ps and Qs.

We had President Roosevelt seeking to purge McCarran. And while the people of Nevada were very strongly for FDR, they rejected him on that McCarran purge.

It was not long after that, that Carville and McCarran began to divide over appointments. Carville could be hardheaded too, in spite of his (I always thought it was a French name and they tell me that it's actually an Irish name—Carville)—and that he could be just as hardheaded an Irishman as McCarran could, which led up to a definite division in later years.

The '40 election, of course, centered around the third term. The war had started in Europe. The Democrats were still pretty much in the saddle or practically all the way in the saddle, and nothin' comes to my mind that was real sensational about that election.

And the real one—in some ways amusing and other ways some bitterness entering into it—[was] that 1942 election. Now we must bear in mind that when Key Pittman died in '40, Governor Carville had named Berkeley

Bunker, young service station operator from Las Vegas who had been Speaker of the Assembly at a very young age, as U.S. Senator. Our lone congressman, Jim Scrugham, with ten years in the lower house was real upset that he did not receive the appointment. And he proved his determination to attempt to convince Carville and all the voters that he should have been the Senator and not Bunker, and in 1942 when Bunker sought the unexpired term [of] U.S. Senator, Scrugham went right after him. And it was a bitterly fought battle. Scrugham won by eleven hundred and fifty votes.

But oh, some of the stories that went around that the Aluminum Company of America, ALCOA, was involved in it, that Basic Magnesium Company and over the production of magnesium at Gabbs—that got very much involved in the campaign. It was charged that Bunker was bein' pushed by ALCOA to keep up a running attack on the poor job that Basic Magnesium, Ltd. was doing, and he had a lot of evidence at that, whether ALCOA pushed him or not. Many of us saw it, and it was a terrible bungle—wartime bungle. When I say that, I'm casting reflection upon no individual, but just miscalculation and the like.

Gabbs as we know it today—we used to call it Brucite—had a very small operation in the production of brucite for refractory purposes, lining of furnaces and the like. But with the outbreak of war and the need for magnesium, they decided to tear into the side of that huge mountain and get magnesite more than brucite. In the rush to set up a huge mining operation and a huge processing operation which created the town of Henderson—they located the plant at Henderson on the theory that they were close to Boulder Dam and cheaper power—I think somewhat at times must have been a

bit of a political ploy. They could have very well located it even in Mina, as well as what we call Henderson now, by a guarantee of bringing power right over the Sierras from what's now Cal-Edison Company but was then Cal-Electric Company.

I know the day right prior to the 1942 election, we had a big tour of the plant, luncheon and speeches, particularly by this typical little Englishman, Major Ball. And he had one of these African safari hats and wearing shorts, which was a very rare thing among men in those days—khaki shorts. And that day he made that statement, we almost wanted to just skip lunch and go get a bottle of beer or somethin'. He came up with the most brilliant observation that with the American dollars and the British know-how that we would succeed in getting that magnesite out of the mountain and down to Henderson, make magnesium and win the war.

It always stuck in our craw—the American dollars and the British know-how—because at that time, Scrugham was there that day, and he was pushin' it. He needed something to fire back at Bunker, to defend those attacks about the bungling that was going on. And actually on that day, the plant wasn't ready to operate. Press releases were sent out all over, but one of their final processes, they faked it with a bypass, and it did not go down to the final crushing area—was not set up.

Some years later in talking with the—what we call the Basic people—and I repeat that was the old Basic Dolomite in Maple Grove, Ohio and then was Basic Ores out at Gabbs, subsidiaries of the Basic Corporation. But the government forced them to take in as their partner this Magnesium (something else), Limited, a British outfit. And the British were really in charge out there, and they did make a hell of a mess of it. They had a hard time. In fact, before the war was over, Anaconda

Copper Corporation was called in to get that thing moving, get that rock to the crusher, get the concentrates out, truck 'em to Henderson, and get moving.

Now whether this is a true story or not, I don't know. But talking to some of the Basic people some years later when they came back and took over their own house now and moved out their British cousins [chuckling], and got the thing back down to the production of peacetime magnesite and brucite, they *claim* that the plans for this huge plant (and it seemed that it caused them to bungle) were brought from the Isle of Crete where British troops purportedly had come across a vast number of designs and plans that had been left behind by the Germans. And that's what they brought here. Well, we do know that when the war was over, that the plans that they punched in out here at Gabbs had long since been considered obsolete by the Germans. Whether they were just an intentional plant we don't know, but when we took over at the beginning of World War II, Germany had far superior and more sophisticated operation than the thing we were struggling to get accomplished out here. Now for what it's worth, as I say, we kick these things back and forth.

We know that Scrugham went on to win in the general election, then was in office at the time of his death, just, I think, three years later—1945. But some of the amusing sides of that '42 election now we're at war and everybody's gonna save the nation by running for office, and even poor Maurice Sullivan came out of retirement and was elected to Congress, in [chuckling] addition. That was when Vail Pittman made his debut at state level coming out for lieutenant governor, and there were six or seven in that race.

Joe Farnsworth had stepped down as state printer, and longtime friend, Jack [J.

A.] McCarthy (then in Reno, formerly of Hawthorne and Yerington, who'd been away from the printing business for some years) decided it was an ideal setup when three Smiths were mentioned for the race, Dean Smith and Ben Smith out of the printing office and Claude Smith of the *Fallon Standard*. It was either Dean or Ben—I think Dean decided not to run—but Ben Smith got into the race; Claude Smith got into the race, and Jack McCarthy got into the race. And at that time, I had to support Claude Smith because I'd been much closer to him than I had McCarthy, although after that election I always stayed with Jack McCarthy. But I kept tellin' Claude [chuckling], I says, "You can get two Smiths in there," I says, "the first guy who comes along with the odd name is gonna win it." And I do think it had a lot of effect because if you've got Smith, Brown and Jones and Pellegrini, I'd bet on Pellegrini [chuckling] bein' the odd man in the group, and two each of the others.

Another amusing incident in that race, Malcolm McEachin, our secretary of state, was ridin' high on his political star and would have only token opposition, and I think was looking for none. And lo and behold, a little fella who'd formerly lived in Hawthorne and Aurora had come out from the east, I believe, as a remittance man—that was always my impression—Hyman Werner, a little Jewish fellow that was amusing, a character, Jerry Lewis type. He surprised everybody [chuckling], went to Carson and filed for secretary of state on the Republican ticket. Well, Denver Dickerson told me McEachin about went out his mind. He says, "The only one I can think," he says, "who got that character in the race is that damn McCloskey down in Hawthorne; he's the only one that knows him." Well, I had nothin' to do with him, but I got a big laugh out of it because

knowin' My, he put a lot of humor into it. And McEachin, for some reason, always contended that I got My Werner into it, and I had no more influence on My Werner getting into it than I had Willie Brown runnin' for assembly in San Francisco [chuckling].

One other amusing side in that race, Red [Wayne] McLeod runnin' for reelection (surveyor general) and had a number of friends down here because he'd lived here at one time, both in Mina and Hawthorne. And there're two or three local fellows went out campaigning for Red McLeod, went to Yerington, worked their way back up to Sweetwater. Instead of coming over Lucky Boy back to Hawthorne, they took the other road out of Sweetwater and went into Bridgeport, California. And apparently after a day or a night in Yerington and then on up all day, stop at Sweetwater and ending up in Bridgeport, they apparently had run out of both money and whiskey because they sent a telegram to Red McLeod in Carson City [laughing] and said, "Need money, could use some whiskey too." And it went from Bridgeport, California to Carson City. McLeod wired back—he said, "I won't get any votes in Mono County; get the hell back to Hawthorne!" [Chuckling]

And that was the same year when my good friend Jack [John R.] Ross [was] seekin' the election as attorney general on the Republican ticket, and I'd known him for many years when he was district attorney at Yerington and [was] really workin' for him. And his opponent was Alan Bible, but I was stickin' with Jack Ross. And we thought we were givin' Alan a pretty fair run, knew that it was an uphill battle; but if there'd been any doubt to the outcome, it was dispelled in Eureka. Ross got into Eureka and got to nippin' pretty heavily, and he spent two and a half, almost three days in Eureka. He was gonna spend the rest of the campaign in Eureka [chuckling],

and that was the end of that campaign. Then with all due respect to their families and all, you don't like to recall these side incidents, but they knew, too; the family knew, so I don't think there's anything wrong with bringin' it out. These were some of the laughs we used to get out of some of these campaigns that never made print. [Chuckling]—they didn't have it!

To fill in then back to that Carville-Bunker appointment in 1942, leading up to the close tie between Carville and Bunker was the activity of a group of young Democrats. They were a carry-over from the actual Young Democratic Club of Nevada that got going strong in 132 during the big drive. And I'll backtrack clear to there for a moment 'cause I remember. There was Walter Baring, Kelly Bannigan, Malcolm McEachin—they were the big shots in the Young Democrats of the state and most of 'em in the Reno-Carson area. In fact, I went to one of their conventions; I'm sure it was in '34. And I have to date it by the time certain fellas were still in college and those who were out.

That's the famous convention where I figuratively got tossed out on my ear, and that happened this way: There was a strong contest for the office of president of the Nevada Young Democrats between Jack [John S.] Halley rising young attorney in Reno, Billy [William] Maher ((M-a-h-e-r), Ma-her the Irish would say, but some called him Maher [pronouncing it Maher.] And it was a really a tight contest. Not too many delegates at that convention—I think it was thirty-nine. And they had chosen up sides because each one wanted to be the fair-haired leader of the future. I happened to be in Reno that weekend they were holding the convention, stayin' at the Golden Hotel; I think it was an inside room, two dollars or something like that, I don't know.

I got a call at seven-thirty in the morning on a Sunday, and I didn't feel like getting up.

I'd been out late the night before. And the call came from John Gilmartin and Bill Maher, and they asked if I could please get down to the state building and give them a hand before the convention opened. They said they had to swing those three Nye County votes. The three delegates were not there, but Oly Lusovich was holding the proxies for the three votes. They knew that Oly and I had been close friends; I'd helped him on a matter or two. And I said I would get down and do the best I could, but I didn't know all the ramifications, and I reminded 'em. I said, "Well, now who's ramrodding on the Halley side from that end?"

And they said, "Well, four-eyed Jimmy Clark."

See we had four-eyed Jim Clark lived in Goldfield, and two-eyed Jim Clark lived in Tonopah, so we had to designate 'em that way. And well, why all this pitch then for Halley—I said Billy Maher was a kid in Goldfield and surely I thought Esmeralda would stay with him and probably pick up some help in Nye. No, it seems that Alice Halley, Jack Halley's sister, had gone to Goldfield as a young schoolteacher and one of the most popular ones to ever go there, had friends throughout the community, and they were backin' Jack Halley because of their strong admiration of his sister, Alice Halley. That entered into it. The Tonopah group were a little—I believe the ones that had been elected delegates, had they showed up, might have voted for Bill Maher. But in the meantime while John Gilmartin and Bill Maher were givin' me the complete rundown, I see John Gilmartin's brother Bill up to his neck in the Halley camp; and I said, "Well, is Bill workin' somebody over there?"

And they said, "No—he's with that other crowd." So the two brothers, young Bill and Big John, were on the opposite sides [chuckling].

Well I finally got hold of Lusovich and told him what it meant, and that they really owed it to Billy Maher, a small town boy out of Goldfield, then raised in Virginia City, worked in Virginia City rather in the mines, and—instead of givin' it to this nice young attorney out of Reno. And I had Lusovich just about convinced when I recall Jack Burns, retired now from the grocery business in Yerington—livin' in Yerington; some other young Democrat; and good old Ed [E. C.] Mulcahy with the Sparks *Tribune*, who'd been in the state assembly, been chief clerk of the assembly and was a real powerhouse in the Democratic party—good old Ed was there—explainin' to the Young Democrats how to run their show. He was in command, and he got behind me, put his hands on my shoulders—they walked me to the door out of the state building and told me that it was nice to have me show them the courtesy of coming down to see so many of my friends and what a good setup they had there, and they'd be happy to have me back as soon as the convention adjourned. [Chuckling] so out the door I went on that one.

And that was the young gang. They didn't stay divided that much. Incidentally, the vote went twenty-one to eighteen—the three votes from Nye goin' to Maher would have put him over twenty-one to eighteen, so you can see why they were pullin' teeth, pullin' hair and everything else to get those votes. Well, they were the more forward or onstage performers at the time—young, we might say, precinct workers, ward heelers and all. As that young Democratic group grew between '34 and '38, they didn't move too strongly under Kirman; but then when that opening came in 138, they had developed quite a group and did get behind Carville very strongly. I recall meeting in John's bar (John Etchebarren) just around the corner from Second and

Virginia, and there was Carville; there was “two-eyed” Jim Clark from Tonopah; Jack Walsh, who is now at the Algiers in Vegas and been with many of the large casinos, is on the state Gaming Commission’ and I don’t recall whether Forrest [M.] Bibb was there that day or not, and Carville himself. And they were pickin’ my brain, askin’ me to please support Carville, and I think it was, back again to Bill Kinnikin who suggested that they might have a noontime cocktail or something and pick my brain and see what I could do to help them.

I recall that one day while Carville was pleased with all these younger people supportin’ him, that with Harmon coming into that race and not knowing who the Republican nominee would be, that he go down to the old *Gazette* and have a long talk with Joe McDonald, and he did. Joe McDonald told me afterwards, and Carville told me. Joe said to me—he said, “With everybody I know and all the years I’ve been in politics,” he said, “that was the first time I ever had a really *real* talk with Ted Carville, and he’s been the U.S. Attorney for four years.” And they really weren’t close friends then, but Joe liked him and gave him a lot of help.

But now they formed real county organizations. And, I say, some of the names that would come to mind—I can start right here at Hawthorne, move south—Farrell Seevers in Hawthorne, John Cavanaugh in Tonopah, Art Revert in Beatty, Berkeley Bunker in Las Vegas. I don’t know where Jack Conlon was—either in Vegas or back up in Reno. He might’ve been in Carson at the time (he worked on time under McLeod). But Jack Conlon; I think it was Casey [Gerald A.] Fisher out in Ely, and oh—just the names’d almost pop, but in nearly every county you walked into there was someone there, a real active, young Democrat. And they did have

a real organization going, and they helped Carville very much [in] ’38, in his reelection of ’42. But when this sudden turn came of Pittman dying a few days after the 1940 election, I do believe that it was the influence of those young Democrats that prevailed upon Carville to give the appointment to Bunker. As I say, I was surprised. I thought he would go for, frankly, an older man at the time.

MODERN-DAY POLITICS

We’ve mentioned about Al Cahlan, always waiting in the wings for some top appointment. He’d showed that in the early thirties when he served one term in the assembly, but Al wanted to attain some recognition politically. He was a brilliant writer, he put out a good newspaper, but his burning desire seemed to be a high office. An’ those two we mentioned—Carville told me himself, a lot of heat was put on him to give it to Scrugham, and he had to give it a lot of thought. Carville never mentioned the Cahlan angle to me; he did mention Scrugham.

Well, we got through ’42, and then the one I missed out on a lot of fun in 1944—that bitter primary contest between McCarran and [Vail] Pittman. And I do believe that when Vail made his debut in ’42, after Key’s death, that Vail, somethin’ like so many others, had been waiting all those years to take the mantle, or whatever they call it, because he was in the state senate—and I liked Vail very much, personally, and Liz [Ida Brewington Pittman], especially—but Vail did have a weakness that he liked to hear himself talk, just enjoyed it. And when he was up there in the state senate, Vail’d be makin’ speeches when the committee was in the back room takin’ care of the bill. [Chuckling]

But he felt the state had passed on to him, I guess, the need to continue the Pittman name;

and winning in '42, that's when he chose to take on the old Pittman family enemy, Pat McCarran, in '44. And it was a close and bitter race.

I was gone at the time, and when I came home (I voted absent ballot—not in that race bein' Republican), I heard more stories that they were busing voters in from Los Angeles, and that they didn't let the absentee ballots in. But here again it was something I couldn't figure out or analyze. McCarran and Bunker were presumed to be pretty close friends at that time because McCarran and Scrugham were never close. McCarran did lean to Bunker in that '42 campaign, I know that.

Now here's this same crowd of young Democrats; they turned right around and dumped poor old Maurice Sullivan out of his happy home, the House of Representatives, after that one term when he'd made his comeback in '42. Bunker challenged him for the Democratic nomination and beat him, and that was, of course, with the support of all these young Democrats. But in giving Bunker that victory, why or where those young Democrats went in that McCarran-Pittman race, I don't know. And I do know that there were a number of the young Democrats who were pretty well down on McCarran—his age, and he'd become pretty conservative, and I think that's the only thing I see. And I do think at that time the young Democrats split their support; that is, they stayed with Bunker, but a lot of them went over to the Pittman side and almost put him over. There might have been some minor races of interest or excitement, but I wasn't here as I say, so I can't tell ya too much other than that angle in '44.

And, of course, in 1946 all hell broke loose when—fill in the interim there, that we know that Scrugham died. Carville took the appointment himself allowin' Pittman to step up as governor, then appointing Carville. And

then when the '46 election came along, the need to run for the unexpired term, the real shocker was when Berkeley Bunker chose to run against the man who had caught a lot of hell for appointin' him in the first place. And it was very obvious that Bunker was given a strong push by Pat McCarran 'cause I argued this to McCarran myself. He was walkin' out of the gate of my own house, and I said, "Well, Pat, I'm still supportin' you; I have no vote in the primary, but," I says, "I just cannot see Berk bitin' the hand that fed him." And I says, "I won't get into any kind of a deal like that," and I said, "I have to say I hope you lose this one."

He says, "Well, we're not going to—" Well, they didn't.

Carville crossed McCarran on two or three issues. McCarran thought he was ungrateful for that because McCarran had originally appointed Carville as U.S. Attorney and fought for him when Key Pittman was ousting him. And Pat bein' pretty determined and wantin' to be boss, he thought that he should have a number of those appointments. And the best I could ever find of the split—and I talked to Carville about it himself. He said, "Well, I tried to get along with the old man. We did for a while, but," he says, "he just wanted to run my office, and I wouldn't let him." So that was the thing.

And I recall in that same bitter primary campaign in 1946, that Berkeley Bunker and Ray Germain came to Hawthorne (Ray was then his administrative assistant), couldn't get a room in Hawthorne. The war hadn't subsided that much—the cutback. We had our little two-bedroom house, and we let Bunker and Germain have the other room, sat up about half the night arguin' and talking. I told Bunker that I thought he was writin' his own political death warrant, and he wanted to know why I thought that. He alluded to the

fact that Scrugham had dumped him once, but he'd made a quick comeback right away and become *the* congressman. And I said, "People just don't buy this, Perk." I said, "I think you will beat Carville in the primary. It'll be close, but I think you'll beat him."

"Well, that's all I need," he said. "If I get the nomination," he said, "there's no way Malone could beat me in the general election."

"Nope," I said, "lightning's gonna strike on Molly." I says, "You're opening the gate and it'll strike." Ray Germain, some years later—several times in later years we'd talk about that. He said, "My God," he said, "I've never forgotten you tellin' Berk that he was goin' down the tube and lightning was gonna hit Malone."

I says, "Well it did!"

He says, "I know it did."

That, as we know, was the real surprise, the turnaround, not only with Molly stoppin' Bunker, but (and I think this was a throwback again to our Young Democrat crowd) here was the popular secretary of state, virtually unbeatable; Malcolm McEachin had decided to step out of character and go for a national office and won the Democratic nomination for representative in Congress. And, by golly, he went down the tube with Bunker; Charlie Russell beat him in that race. And I think that there was kind of a tandem feeling there about the—not that McEachin was so young any more—they're all gettin' up in years at that time, but not too old; but I think that cost McEachin a lot too, and of course, takin' nothin' away from Charlie's own personal appeal and popularity.

One other very interesting development in that 1946 election for United States Senator, was the entry of George Marshall, Judge George Marshall, into the race in the Republican primary against Molly Malone. And it was amusing how the thing developed.

It was about two o'clock in the morning in the old Last Frontier in Las Vegas. We had a Lions' convention down there, and the Hawthorne club had been organized only about a year; and we used to think it was a must that we had to go to a convention every year. And they were playin' their politics up and down—Lions' politics and state politics. And I think little Doc [Robert N.] Broadbent from Ely was sittin' in that group, and old Tom [Thomas J. D.] Salter, one time a judge at Winnemucca, and they were to talk Marshall into running against Malone. Marshall said he'd like very much to, but he was prohibited by the Constitutional provision that says that a judge can seek none other than a judicial office during the term for which he was elected. And I said, "Well, that's true, but," I said, "the office you're holding now, you weren't elected to it."

He says, "What the hell do you mean? I got a big vote in the last election."

I said, "Yes," but I said, "you resigned so that Clark County could obtain its second judgeship." Now they had an appointive position to fill, and that was the agreement that they made, so Marshall got the appointive position. So I says, "You're serving by appointment, not election."

Well, they all reared back, and the next morning they had a conference of attorneys down there. And they concluded that I might be right on that point. They checked it out in Carson City, and it turned out that way. Marshall was eligible to run. He ran and lost to Malone, but the hairline way in which he got into the race caused the legislature to immediately go to work in 1947 and add the words "or appointed" behind the word "elected." It passed again in '49, and the people of Nevada put it in by a big majority in 1950, expressing the will of the people that they wanted that provision and the prohibition

in the Constitution whether elected or appointed. And that was the big hassle I had two years ago with Jim Santini showin' the intent, not only the legislature, but of the voters themselves.

After that big turnaround, Charlie Russell, I believe, had a very good record in Congress, but the whole turnaround in 1948 [was] over the Taft-Hartley law. And Russell did not vote for the Hartley bill in the lower house of Congress. Many of the—they run it together now and say, “Oh, he voted for the Taft-Hartley law.” Charlie voted against the Hartley bill in the lower side. He said he thought it was too punitive; it wasn't fair. The Senate bill was by Senator Robert Taft, and he ripped out a lot of the punitive sections of Hartley's bill. Hartley was gonna put anybody in jail, I guess, for askin' a raise in pay; he had a real bad bill in there. And of course when Taft's bill passed the Senate, now they have to go to conference; and Taft did clean up several features of the Hartley bill. And as you'll recall in later years, Taft agreed to some other changes in it, if he could get the Democratic Congress to go along, but they wanted to leave it the way it was so they could say, “Oh, that's a bad thing.” And when you vote out of conference, you have only a yes or no vote—to accept the conference committee report or not; but it just wasn't enough time, or the people weren't willin' to listen when Charlie and his campaign sought to explain that.

And Baring—Walter Baring was makin' the most of it. And of course, our little Harry Truman happened to drop into Reno that same campaign and put his arms around Walter and said, “I want this boy back there with me.” And he said, “We're gonna repeal the Taft-Hartley law.”

Well, ironically it's still on the books. Walter went back with a very close margin

over Charlie Russell. And up until the time he was defeated, you'd have a hard time gettin' Walter to even consider repealing the Taft-Hartley law [chuckling]. It's just strange how one issue of that nature can turn a complete election, but I guess it's always been that way and is right today and will be in the future. You can—if you don't have ERA to argue about, you can argue about abortion, you can get into amnesty. Usually the major issues without ever bein' clarified can always be reduced to about one word and make a hot campaign issue.

Some of the interesting sidelights on the 1950 campaign and that never reached print—so many have forgotten (after all it is twenty-five, twenty-six years back)—but McCarran again was challenged in the primary, this time by a young attorney, George E. Franklin, from Clark County. And I believe I showed you that confidential letter I received from the old man that year in which he spelled out where the funds were coming from.

They had a big meeting in Denver, Colorado, and the money came from New York. And it all developed because of McCarran's strong position in enacting McCarran-Walter immigration act [Immigration and Nationality Act] and the Displaced Persons Act. Many Jewish people, particularly the organized groups, considered those two acts a direct affront to them in seeking to restrict them. Incidentally, George Marshall was in that race again, was out of the office of judge now; and McCarran believed that Franklin was put in as a stalking horse to cut him to pieces, much the same as Mechling versus Bible developed not too many years later. And that was always McCarran's theory that his opposition was centered in New York, and to his dying day he believed it. And I had two or three arguments with Hank Greenspun about it, and asked him why his people and

the Anti Defamation League, B'nai Brith and all, so violently opposed McCarran, when he did have some very strong supporters. I recall Morry Zenoff; he thought McCarran was the greatest thing since penicillin 'cause Morry was about to lose his paper down there, and McCarran got him in on a real estate deal peddling houses in Henderson.

But the organized groups just insisted that McCarran, by his very act of supporting those two bills, he lost not only a lot of support (not all of it), but incurred the enmity to his dyin' day of certain organized groups. And in later years I talked to Franklin about that, and Franklin more or less acknowledged that was the big issue of the time—those two things, and the Displaced Persons Act and the Immigration Act. Incidentally, George is still very much in the limelight in Las Vegas and now a staunch Republican and probably [chuckling] will win (he wins one and loses one, wins one and loses one), but he's a very entertaining character *and* smart. He proved that in knockin' down the Clark County Metropolitan Government Act.

The other side of that '50 election was McCarran's chance to get back at Pittman (Vail Pittman) for what he had said about him and printed? about him in 1944. He was ready in 1946, but Pittman had no formidable opposition. But this time McCarran went all out, and it was just an open secret that McCarran wanted Charlie Russell elected over Pittman. And he made it.

Two other races that were probably overshadowed by the big ones in that '50 election was the race for state mine inspector. Art Bernard had succeeded Matt Murphy and seemed to be holding the job very well—Democratic ticket. But Bernard as mine inspector, Pittman as governor served together on some committee. I'll have to ask Art someday exactly what that is, but you

know like List, O'Callaghan, and Swackhamer on the prison board, and [chuckling] they're goin' out of their minds; they don't know what's goin' on out there at the prison, yet they're held responsible. But Bernard had crossed Pittman on some appointment, very similar to the old McCarran-Carville deal.

The Pittman forces and with the remnants of some of those Young Democrats again, now getting a little gray hair, prevailed upon Bill Hammond of Tonopah to file against Bernard. I wasn't there when they prevailed upon him, but I get this even from Mervin Gallagher—is the one that told me. Hammond, a mining man, had sought the nomination over Matt Murphy four years before and had failed. So now it appeared there was gonna be a Democratic primary. And Gallagher, who had served as a deputy under Murphy and I believe for a time under Bernard, was up in Virginia City and just workin' for wages and all, told me this. "We figured, well, if they're split that badly, if they're tryin; to dump Bernard with Hammond, there's gonna be an awful division." He said, "I think I'll get into the race myself." Raised the filing fee from among friends and all, and he jumped in making it a three-way race. Now with three Democrats in and no Republican, it would mean the two highest Democrats would go again in November; and Gallagher said he figured it would be himself and Bernard and that he didn't know whether he could beat Art in the general election, didn't think he could. So he went out to Ramsey, the old camp of Ramsey, got old friend Bill Johnson, W. H. Johnson, to file (I'm quotin' Merv Gallagher on this now) on the Republican ticket, so that the top Democrat would have to face a Republican only. And of course Merv came out just a thousand or so—it was a very close vote, I know—over Bernard and won the nomination. And [chuckling] the sequel to

that, after Merv had won the nomination, this old fellow Johnson walked—drove into Carson City, went into Johnny Koontz's office, secretary of state, told him he wanted to withdraw from the race; and Koontz had to tell him, "No way."

"Well," he says, "by golly, I don't want to run against Merv." He said, "The only reason I filed in the first place was to help him." [Chuckling] "That's why," Koontz said, "they got that law in there—to prevent that kind of collusion." And Johnson was a little bit upset about it, but they went back to that old 1914 attorney general's race where [George B.] Thatcher, the Democrat, forced [Richard A.] McKay to stay on the ballot. He wanted to withdraw, too, that time, so that that's in our law that "if nominated I will not withdraw." And they've made it stick.

The other heated controversial race that's also been pretty much forgotten was for state supreme court justice. Charlie [Charles M.] Merrill, nonpolitical, cool, quiet, almost suave attorney in Reno—they prevailed upon him to file against Justice Charles Lee Horsey. And the whole issue there was a labor factor—the White Cross drugstore, I think it was, in Las Vegas and the picket line. And so many people believe that Horsey was too strong in favor of labor bein' permitted, you know, to picket, and it was a matter of an injunction. I don't recall all the details, but the whole issue was there. It was a labor issue, and of course Merrill won that election, and Horsey became the third incumbent justice in the history of the state of Nevada to fail to win reelection, the second one in this century. The other one was Pat McCarran.

[Chuckling] one sidelight on that, poor Charlie Merrill, I say, as a campaigner, head be about on a par with Milton [B.] Badt, also distinguished jurist and scholar; and he came into town (we'd had several phone

calls), and we greeted him, nice fella. And I had this [chuckling] rough old partner, Scoop Connors—he loved his beer—and we had a tin bucket there at the old office down on F Street. But I don't know if canned beer came in then or not, but bottled beer was handy to carry in a bucket, instead of a sack and dropping it and breaking it. So Charlie Merrill asked for suggestions on how to campaign, and my partner Scoop Connors said, "Well, you might as well start here." He said, "You don't do it," he says, "all up there in the law office," he says, "or in the convention centers. Cotta get out in the street, the back doors." Charlie's listening very intently, so Scoop got the bucket and took him to the back door and showed him the back door of a little market that was across the alley from us and, "You go up that ramp in there," and he says, "you get about a half a dozen bottles of beer." He said, "When you're payin' for them," he says, "leave a handful of your cards by the cash register. Anybody speaks to ya, tell 'em who you are."

Well Merrill—I can still see him—he had very limited supply of hair, tall, erect. He looked at me, and I said, "Well, it's a good start, Charlie; try it!" I said, "[If] we go with ya, they'll figure we're draggin' a politician; just go in there."

Well he was, I think, blushing when he went out the door, and I think he was blushing when he came back. But he had the little galvanized bucket with six bottles of beer in it. In the meantime, Scoop had looked out on the street and called a couple of people in. And out there on the stones, as we call them, where we make up the forms and the paper, well, we put cardboard over it; why Scoop brought two or three in and made certain they were all workin' people, too, because of that background of the labor factor, introduced 'em to Charlie Merrill (he said the next supreme court justice). Well, I think Merrill

had to make his second—I know he made a second—possibly a third trip across the alley, and he was nursin’ the one beer, but Scoop was roundin’ up voters and bringin’ ’em in and that way didn’t take ’em into the bar and all. I saw Charlie Merrill [chuckling] many years later, and he laughed about it. He said, “Well,” he said, “I’ve learned somethin’ about campaignin’ in Hawthorne that you can’t learn in law school.” [Laughing] that was one of our little sidelights on the Horsey-Merrill race.

He was a thorough scholar. And I’ve told Frankie Sue Del Papa not to be overwhelmed by Les Gray. I said, “Les is a great little fellow and a sharp attorney, but,” I said, “you better get ahold of his old partner, Charlie Merrill, on some real toughies,” and I said it in front of Les. Of course ’52 and gettin’ almost into modern time, the only unusual thing I can recall—Cliff Young’s upset victory over Walter Baring, and that might have been the turning point in Walter’s philosophical or ideological career because there were some pretty rough ads run on behalf of Cliff Young. And they didn’t say that Walter was a Communist, but they said, in effect, that he certainly could get along with them very well. There was some pretty rough stuff thrown at him; it was a very close race, and I think that’s really what made Walter determined that they were not gonna keep pointin’ the finger at him in that way because Walter was a good citizen and a loyal American—we know that. It really hurt him, I know, on that dump-out.

And of course, the big thing that year was the Bible-Mechling experience (475 votes)—”Tabernacle Tom” [Thomas B. Mechling] as Sundown Wells called him. He fooled us all until about the last week or ten days, and then we began to get scared. We were kinda runnin’ our own homespun polls and all, and we could see trouble, nothin’ but trouble. But he just wouldn’t let up. Oh I don’t say he has

the evangelical finesse that Jimmy Carter has, but he’s pretty fair at tellin’ that story the first time around. And I like old Tom. He was in here last year when he was thinkin’ about comin’ back to Nevada to run for office. We had quite a visit.

But the amusing incident with Mechling—we told him no, no way could we give him any help. We were with Bible, Alan Bible, even though on his initial race in ’42 we had not supported Bible for attorney general and that didn’t bother us, but we wanted Bible. And Tom got across the street from our printing office, made about two—one call and a second one. It was the one time in the whole campaign I felt sorry for him. And he came chargin’ back across the Street [chuckling] into the front office and perspiring a little bit and kinda shakin’, I could see that. And I says, “Well, what’s happened, Tom? Why the quick return, what happened to you?”

“My God,” he says, “you told me to go out there across the street where some people lived, wanted to meet people in Hawthorne.” He says, “You’ve even got the dogs against me down here,” and he says, “look at this,” and he turned around, he says, “a dog just bit me in the ass.” That’s just the way he said it. [Laughing] and there’s a big tear in the seat of his pants, and we had to hustle some safety pins or something [laughing], so Tom could pick up the torn part and get back. He accused us of even organizing the dogs against him.

And of course the windup of that was that lightning struck Molly Malone a second time, only by 2,700 votes out of 81,000 in that general election. And everyone else in the state knows as much about it as I do. I was invited to go in that day; they sent but telegrams and all, to come hear the tapes when Norman Biltz had taped old Tom. But I didn’t bother to go into it. I didn’t want to hear ’em talkin’ all over again. But that and a

reluctant—I won't say reluctant at that stage of the game—but what a turnaround that McCarran had to make and support Molly Malone, which I'm glad he did.

Somewhat similar to that '50 race against McCarran, Mechling was also closely tied to what we used to say—even back East they used to call 'em the “Waldorf Towers crowd” in New York, and they always accused Judge Rosenman of heading it up. And they were out to cut McCarran up more than beat Bible, and intended to keep that, you know, running feud going. So under the circumstances, it was far better to send Molly back than to have a total stranger and an unknown representing us in Washington. And that shining star of Tom's, upsettin' Bible and almost grabbin' the U.S. Senate seat, it really slipped within two years when most people had forgotten—they think of Mechling—Mechling-Bible.

Two years later, he ran for governor of Nevada. Pittman was running, and Pittman had been out of office four years. Pittman was running for the nomination, and Tom Mechling was in that race, so was Archie Grant. I don't know, there were several of 'em in that one. I always remember the poor race that Mechling made for governor, very poor showing, just two years. And although in that race we figured that Pittman'd have a hard time defeating Charlie Russell in that year's election, based upon the primary election vote, we almost got fooled in that one, 'cause, let's see, there was Grant, Mechling, I think Merrill Inch was in that—I know four of five—but Vail got 14,000 votes, and the other Democrats in that race got combined 28,000. An' see, Vail got only one-third of the vote in the primary, but it didn't hold that way in the general. There was a lot of work to be done to reelect Charlie.

In that '54 election, this time Cliff Young gave Baring a pretty good thumping that

looked like that was the end of Walter—that he had gone. And Russell retained his governor's seat, but by a smaller margin than he'd won in 1950. And of course, Rex Bell surfaced then, and won the lieutenant governor race which [was] pretty much expected over Jimmy [James C.] Ryan because like the Pittman primary, Ryan won the nomination with—he polled 11,000 votes, and the others in the race, particularly Jack [John S.] Halley and [John] Squire' Drendel, dividing the vote up' in Reno. They had a combined total of 24,000, Halley, Drendel, and two or three others.

The big one, though, was the U.S. Senate seat after Bible's thumping in '52 by Mechling, and McCarran dropped dead in Hawthorne. That was when the decision was made by the state supreme court that there would be an election. Then, of course, Bible had no difficulty in beating Ernie [Ernest S.] Brown largely because Ernie is so damned honest, frank, forthright—take it or leave it. There was just no place for him in politics because Ernie, as I say, all the descriptives I used a moment ago apply to him. And the public doesn't like that kind of politician that tells 'em the truth all the time.

I might note that '54 was also when the people (the first time around) voted to retain the right-to-work law by rather close margin. I repeat that's the first time. And well 1956, Bible had announced at one stage he did not think he would seek to stay in the Senate, and that brought Mahlon Brown and Harvey Dickerson out of the woods, and then in the late stages he backed into the race. And the story I got, whether I could get anyone to prove it, not only did the Democrats want that sure—that vote in the upper house, but I think old Senator [Robert S.] Kerr from Oklahoma was one of those who really prevailed upon Bible. If you recall he was a wealthy oil millionaire. Well, since he was so

insistent, I think Bible figured, “Well, I won’t have any trouble raisin’ funds and won’t have to go beggin’

Jack Carpenter laughed about it in that Tennessee, humorous way of his afterward. He says, “Hell, I don’t recall Kerr givin’ Bible a hundred bucks, but,” he says, “I do know he put in his bill to the Nevada State Democratic Central Committee for comin’ out from Oklahoma to Lovelock to be the keynote speaker.” So they quickly became disillusioned with [laughing] Senator Kerr.

Of course this is when Cliff Young wanted to move up to the Senate, and the year that Walter Cox and myself got semi-if not all the way—excommunicated from the Republican party. And we’d been close to Bible anyhow and liked Cliff Young, but in the congressional race that year—and Cox did—I think Emery Graunke of Gardnerville-Minden was the state chairman. Cox waited and waited, checkin’ to see if anybody was gonna file for Congress [on] the Republican ticket—if Graunke had any information. And as it got near the deadline for filing, why, they told him no, to go ahead and get into it. There might have been one—there were two other minor candidates, and that one was from Lyon County, too, fella named [Vernon L.] Peterson. So Walter went ahead and filed. And Graunke was bitter about this later turnaround too, he told me about it. Then as they were pullin’ down the curtains, why a young attorney in Reno, Richard Horton, jumped into the race, and that really turned into a battle. Horton defeated Cox by 121 votes, statewide.

What we noticed were the number of signs in the primary, mind you, “Young and Horton,” “Young and Horton.” Cliff denied and disclaimed any connection with having those signs put up; he didn’t authorize ’em; he didn’t particularly approve of ’em. We said, “Have you taken any down?”

“Well, no.”

And particularly out in the White Pine County area, and they really teamed up and knocked Cox out of the box. And Cliff knows it to this day; we’re pretty good friends now, but ’cause he whacked us and we got our chance to whack him in that general election and did. We often kid and talk about it; the only thing, he still disclaims, you know, full responsibility for nominating Horton over Cox. He said they were very close and chummy. But that turned out to be the comeback year for Baring, as we know it.

The Democratic side was wide open too. With Young moving on up to the Senate race, why, they all wanted to get back in the field. And so many people forget this one too, that was the year that Walter Baring beat Howard Cannon. Cannon came in second, and I think Nada Novakovich was third; there were four to five in there. But then went on to really trim Horton, and -that was Walter’s big comeback year, and from that day on, I think he became one of the strongest conservatives that we had back there. And, of course, in the Bible and Young race that was a toughie all the way down the line, and I think Bible won by about 4,800 or something. The turnaround of 2,500 votes, anyhow, could have swung it the other way.

Walter Cox and I took a week off and went to—we stopped in Mina for a few minutes, Coaldale, Tonopah, Goldfield, to buy gas somewhere, but a few groceries or anything at a little store, Beatty—stopped there; I think we stopped [in] Tonopah, for lunch, then Beatty—stopped, had a beer, visited with people, passed out some Bible cards, made Vegas pretty late. And we stayed three days in Vegas, then worked our way back up. We didn’t go over toward White Pine or Lincoln; we figured they were strongly Democratic, let ’em take it. We took off then the following

week, went out through Gabbs, out Eastgate, to Austin, to Eureka, on up through Beowawe, Carlin, into Elko, stayed the full night and worked part of the next day in Elko, worked our way down the river, Battle Mountain, visited old Dan Shovelin, Lemaire, on all sides. Some thought we were very broad-minded out pluggin' for Bible, and others thought we were without parentage for even thinkin' of supportin' Bible—clear down to Winnemucca, Lovelock, back through Fallon, and worked our way home the next day. And we really covered the state for Bible, and about the only credit we got, not from the Democrats for workin' our tail off, but the one man who said we probably had as much to do as anyone in beating him was Cliff Young. He says, "You two characters," he says, "hit more spots 'cause we were gettin' calls back in Reno about it that you were really out in the hustings; you were beatin' all the bushes."

I says, "When we go out to win, we go out to win!"

We worked hard. So Cliff has always figured that Cox and myself had more than a little to do with—. I guess it was "damn you" with faint praise or something, "I don't know what to say." [Laughing] "Ya, there's the guy that—not the guy who elected Bible, the guy that beat me," was about the way he put it.

And of course we had that right-to-work back on the ballot again. They're talking about putting it on once more. I don't think they will. They know they can't get it over. I was just curious about how the counties voted when they attempted the repeal. That's really what it was, Senate Bill—I believe it was 79. It was very controversial, and everybody knew it by its number. But Clark voted repeal. Lincoln, strange enough, almost tied, 718 to repeal and 759, no. Mineral voted no repeal. I must've had a little influence in those days, I don't know. And Storey missed by ten votes, and

Washoe was very close, 12,128 to 12,864. And of course White Pine, strong labor county, voted no repeal. And in '56 see, if there's any general change; it was number one again. I know, the first time I think it was number one on the ballot—an initiative petition—this time was retained by 7,000, and Clark had a much closer vote that time. And Lincoln, this time, was strong retaining it, and Mineral still was on the opposite side [chuckling] because it was the only county in the state that voted so that—no Washoe 2,196 to 2,100.

My biggest objection, as I told in that thirty-minute conversation with George Wingfield and Jack Myles—Jack was handling the publicity on it, and we'd talk it over on very friendly terms and debated. I said, "I'll go for your damn bill," I says, "if you'll adopt either the Wisconsin law" (Wisconsin had a pretty good regulation on it then, on closed-shop, open-shop)—"but if you'll put one thing in there—" and it's a small concession to make, but they couldn't get the big boys to outlaw the "blacklist." I said, "You want this all one way, that anybody can work without belonging to a union," and I said, "I pretty well agree with you but," I said, "I want to see every man or woman have the right to work; if they do belong to a certain union and someone finds out that they hold a union card, that they can't blacklist 'em and pass the word along." I said I wanted that much protection in there for the workin' people, but I could never get it on and it's not there today, 'cause a blacklist can be a very vicious thing.

I believe I told you I saw it as a kid in Tonopah, saw my father's name on a blacklist "Do not hire these men". An older brother of mine later was blacklisted in Reno because he was secretary to the plumbers' union at the time, and they were havin' some difficulties. And I say that, since we're not going to force any man to join a union in order to work,

we should also give those who do belong to the union some protection against bein' automatically denied the right to work because of their affiliation. And that's all. I probably today would, if they brought it up again, certainly would go along to retain the right to work. It hasn't been all that bad for the unions, and when I get talkin' to strong union friends of mine, I really have to turn the story around and give them hell, and say it hasn't been all that bad. I didn't get the one thing I wanted in, but it hasn't been all that bad. I says, "How many people went to work down in Mercury—unless they had a card—from laborers on up?" I said, "You try to get a job in Reno today; you've even got South Tahoe in the jurisdiction, or over around Carson City the state capital, and Vegas." It's all highly unionized, and unionized in a right-to-work state, but it does have the effect—well, to me it's like the death penalty—a deterrent.

They say it's not a deterrent, but don't kid yourself—the death penalty, I speak of now. But it's there if you have to use it, and it hasn't hurt the state that much I'll grant ya! But I would be just as firm, pigheaded or anything else if I hear of anybody anywhere in the state bein' blacklisted. I'll go through the ceiling and do everything I can to help 'em. When I say blacklisted, this doesn't mean you fire a man and let him go find a job. They say, "We won't let him work;" they're running him out of the state. Well I know when the Smith brothers were running the El Capitan, they were pretty much that way. If they found anybody, you know, was gonna carry a union card, they would get rid of 'em and then tell two or three other fellows, "Don't hire that fellow," you know; "he's dangerous." Well, they assumed that if you carried a union card you automatically were an agitator and a troublemaker. And that's what I didn't like about it, was the whole issue of the blacklist.

Some of our gaming clubs today, particularly in Las Vegas, if you get laid off or canned, say, in one of the many Hughes plush hotels, it's quite likely that you will not find a job in any of the remaining hotels. And in very recent years, the gambling clubs in Vegas had a pretty close-knit deal that way. If they have a beef with a fella, particularly if he was goin' in for, say, attempting to organize the union and all; they'd let him go, and pass the word down to all the other clubs, you know. "Don't put him on." Well, to me it was a denial of the right to work, and that's what a blacklist is.

I think each employer should be able to stand on his own two feet and decide whether he wants to hire someone that quit or had been fired across the street or whether he doesn't, but not to develop at the employer level that close-knit control, and sayin' if he gets out of line, he'd better leave town or leave the state, can't have a job. And that was really my main argument—that time I was far more rabid than I am now, but as long as they were puttin' this on, I wanted to see elimination of the blacklist. That's what it was all about. George Wingfield agreed with me that he thought the blacklist was damned unfair, that it was too late to get into it and this, that, the other thing, and we don't want to tamper with the bill 'cause then you don't get—open it up, why they'll try to throw it out.

And '58 was the third time around for Molly Malone, and some Democrats were takin' a look at the seat again. I refer now to Howard Cannon tryin' it once more (he'd lost two years before to Walter Baring on the congressional side), and Dr. Fred Anderson ended up in one of the tightest Democratic primaries that we've had in a long time. Cannon carried only two counties in the state, Lincoln and Clark, but edged Anderson by about 1,400 votes.

I have some old figures from somewhere that I've never thrown away, making the estimate on that race. I say, I have the figures—this is something that I've done for years. Walter Cox comes over one day before the election, and we compare notes. And while they're putting it through the computer down at Mercury and elsewhere, and running polls, we've always been quite proud—. Anderson-Cannon at one point on Anderson's high side I had him winning by 270 votes. On a revise I had Cannon 19,575 and Anderson 560. We were back into a tie. I recall showing these to Howard Cannon. In fact this one here I had Cannon winning by 851 votes. I had raised Cannon's vote from 43,000 in Clark County to 13,260. See, I had Washoe—on that same one I raised Anderson-Washoe up 260 [or] 300, gave Cannon 2,700, instead of 2,5[00]. I recall showin' those to Howard Cannon; he shook his head; he said, "It's mighty close, mighty close." And it was.

They went back to Las Vegas and hustled Cannon, another 1,000 votes out of Clark County and cut Anderson down a little. And that was the turnaround. They reduced Anderson to 4,548 in Clark and pushed Cannon up to 14,964. That's more than 10,000 votes. He won by 14,068 in that race. To show you the fun we can have with these at times, take that close one; we just put—Cannon a little ahead—just a spot check to show you. The actual vote in Eureka was Anderson 145, Cannon 59. We had given Anderson 140, and Cannon 70. Humboldt, the actual vote 646 [to] 281; and we had given Anderson 570 and Cannon 280.

I just say that it's nothing brilliant, exceptional or anything of that kind. On any of these races the simple formula is to go back, check prior races of that candidate against a comparable candidate. If both of 'em haven't run before, check the percentage of one or

two elections, apply that percentage to your estimated vote in the county. And we usually take the low side because it's safer, even if there's more votes cast because the pattern will follow—and tally them county by county, and you can come pretty close.

Not to dwell on this polling bit, but we're there, I'm gonna say something more. I laughed when at one stage Harvey Dickerson, George Franklin, and Grant Sawyer in the office at different times—. I would keep revising according to their estimates. Harvey Dickerson got a little bit upset with me that day when I had him in third place and just couldn't see it at all, and he says, "You're way off."

I said, "We'll see when the election comes out." But the vote ran considerably higher than we had been estimating, and on our final tab we gave Dickerson 12,035 statewide; he received 13,372. We gave Franklin 13,900; he received 10,175. And of course we gave Sawyer, in first place with 14,550; he received 20,[000], but it was the increase in total votes—we were peggin' it on 81,800.

But in each of those poll taking efforts that we made, it is surprising. And not so much the totals, but go back through the cow counties; what throws us all the time is naturally Washoe and Clark. For example, we were giving Dickerson 7,500 in Clark; he received 7,246. Givin' Franklin 8,000, received 6,000—that's where he dropped from that 12 to 10 on us. And givin' Sawyer 4,000; he went up to 6,464. He got the new heavy vote in Clark County. Washoe, usually hard to peg—we gave Dickerson 2,500, and he received 2,446. Gave Franklin 3,000, and he received only 2,300. And gave Sawyer only 3,500, and he received 6,000. He picked up the new votes. But aside from those two, if you go back through those cow counties and you'll hit 'em within 3, 6, 12—not very far off. And our little system

has been checked and rechecked on the cow counties, then make the best effort we can to determine what Washoe will be, and consolidating that margin, you know, what you're going into Clark County with.

Skipping over, but quite a few years, here are my old sheets from Bible and Pike. And we had Bible carrying the cow counties by only 2,400 votes, and in fact 2,362 was the figure we gave. And I think that he came out of the cow counties about 2,500. Washoe threw us a little more because we were tryin' to give—we had conceded Washoe to Pike by 2,000 votes, 22,360 to 20,340, but he did lose Washoe by 3,000, which should wind up my brief dissertation on polls, but we'll be doin' it again this year if there's any worthwhile point, but I doubt if there will be. In other words, Cannon against no opposition is not worthwhile to figure, but where you do get these real tight races, either primary or general, it's a lot of fun to get down. And then you talk to a lot of people goin' through, you pick up reports from people.

One thing we never rely upon are the political columns in the newspapers [chuckling] 'cause many times they know less what's goin' on in the county than the readers do. Just talkin' with people who are kind of on the "in," and you can study sometimes the shift of former supporters, what the beef will be. In line with that, why, just an aside, back in those days when Ralph Denton was running against Walter Baring, I think Ralph received something like 311 votes the first time around in Mineral County, and next time he was running he says, "Are you gonna treat me that rough this time?"

And I said, "Oh no, Ralph, you'll get a few more votes here this time." There was 1,000 difference between his vote and Baring's.

He said, "Well, what do you consider a few more?"

I said, "—about eighteen."

And, "Why?"

I said, "Well Walter's had the naming of postmaster since he ran against you the last time." And I says, "Only one can get the job," and I said, "the other two are kind of hot at him, and I figure between the two of 'em, they can influence 18 votes." Well, that'd given him about 329.

He came back with about 346, and he wrote me one of the cutest notes ever. [Chuckling] He says, "As a political prognosticator," he says, "you have really slipped." And he figured out the percentage difference that I had missed by—tellin' him he'd get only 329, and he did get 346. He [chuckling] broke it down to percentage, one of the best acts of sportsmanship and good humor that a fella could still display when he hit me with that one.

Well, back to this 1958, as I say, Cannon did edge Anderson out. That was a real race 'cause we know he went on to beat Malone by a rather handy number there. And Baring was challenged once more by Nada Novakovich, but won by a substantial margin, and then went on to clobber Robert Horton, the twin brother of Richard Horton whom he defeated two years before. Then in that jabbering about the poll taking, that was the same story again that Sawyer, the young former district attorney out of Elko County, former University regent by appointment—I say that because that was one of Grant's first tries for state office, the University regent, and he didn't make it. He lost in that race, the first time he tried it at election, but then he really defeated Charlie Russell by a wide margin, in 1958, as you'll recall, it was a heavy Democratic year. Eisenhower had really given the Republicans no leadership to speak of, and he was just riding out his second term. And here in Nevada the trend was going with it.

It was indicated both in Cannon and Baring victories.

And so Sawyer had no real difficulty in turning back Charlie Russell's bid for a third term. And rather ironical that one of the big issue they made against Russell, that three terms are too long for any governor, and Grant told me some years later that had he known how far in front he was of Charlie, he would have squelched the third term issue at every turn. See, he could have won without even questioning the third term, surely, although it was a big factor. But it came back to haunt Grant when he tried for the third term. And now, as we know, why the people themselves have said two terms are long enough.

And '60, two old-timers made their last bid—Molly Malone this time won the Republican nomination for Congress, but was no match for Baring; and that old and dear friend, Ernie [Ernest S.] Brown, decided to take a last try at public office for supreme court justice. Ernie decided to take the challenge, and Ernie received 47,177 votes, and [Frank] McNamee 48,523. It was a nip and tuck race all the way through. So that was the end of the political careers of two fine fellas in my book, Molly the outgoing, super-talkative, flamboyant-type Republican; Ernie Brown, the almost scholarly type (I think he had taught school at one time or certain courses at the University), low key, methodical, meticulous in everything he did, particularly in the field of law. And so to me, I lost a couple of good friends from the political picture; of course they didn't last too much longer after that, as I recall, both deceased now.

[Nineteen] sixty-two was somewhat of a rerun of the 1946 issue. Berkeley Bunker, after spending many years out of the state doing church work in the southeastern states (I think, with headquarters in Georgia or Alabama) had returned and decided to

reenter the political arena, so to speak. And, I think he put his toe a little bit in the water, looking at the governorship, wonderin' if a southern Nevada man could turn back this Elko County boy, Sawyer, at the end of one term.

A number of us had attended the funeral for Mrs. C. P. Squires [Delphine], Mom Squires, as they called her, in Las Vegas. She and her husband, Pop, [Charles Pember] Squires, for many years were pioneer newspaper people, ran the *Las Vegas Age*. And following the funeral services, sometime following, we decided to have lunch together; and I say *sometime* because I'm gonna interject something here. We attended the services, the requiem, at the Christ Church Episcopal, the east side of town out toward Maryland Parkway; place [was] just packed, beautiful service. And there was Cox, Archie Grant, Hank Greenspun, and myself. And, a number of us whispering—I think one of the hymns they sang or one of the passages that was chanted was "O, Jerusalem," and we nudged Hank and says, "You even have your influence here too." And at the end of the service in the church, unlike our small town funerals where we have the cortege, I believe they call it, the funeral procession (the cars turn on their lights and go directly to the cemetery); there we all scattered, on a basis of every man for himself, to regroup at the cemetery.

The Bunker brothers were in charge of arrangements and they had a memorial gardens north and west of Las Vegas, north going to Tonopah; you had to go out the Tonopah highway. And we swore we'd never get there because after traveling several miles wondering whether we had passed it, missed it, and Greenspun kept insisting no. He was driving his own car, but the gas tank was on empty. So we said, "Well, we better stop at Lathrop Wells or somewhere and get gasoline

before we get to the cemetery, or we'll never get back." [Laughs] And we kidded and boobed, and oh, another one was with us ridin' in the car—Archie didn't ride out with us—Henry Gilbert of Hawthorne was with us. Those were the four in the car, Cox, Gilbert, McCloskey, and Greenspun. And worryin' about that empty gas tank marker, and not knowing how far out that cemetery was, we did a lot of talking.

I recall making the remark, and I said, "Well, Walter, I'm afraid we're in pretty bad shape;" I says, "we're following a poor Episcopalian lady who's bein' driven somewhere by a Mormon bishop, and we're tryin' to get there, with a Jew at the steering wheel and a Protestant in the back seat with me." And I said, "I don't think this is any place for a couple of Catholics!" [Laughter] And it struck us funny, of all the combinations we had going.

Well now back to the political side, when we returned to town, why, we went by to pick up Archie Grant. We said we would pick him up. Went by his office; it was down on south First or somewhere. So he got in with us, and we told him we were going to the T'bird. Hank, in the meantime, had told Bunker to meet us at the Thunderbird for lunch, and in the course of explaining it, when Archie Grant heard what we were going to talk about (politics and try to smoke Bunker out on whether he was returning to the field), Archie insisted on Hank stopping the car. He said, "Let me out here; I'll eat downtown. I'm not going with you birds," and Archie wouldn't ride out with us. Gilbert went along for the ride I remember; Henry, he got a kick out of it because his family had been in and out of politics for years. So we met Berkeley out there, and Greenspun was all for Berkeley taking on Sawyer for the Democratic nomination for governor.

Four years before, why Hank was strong for Sawyer. He had kinda cooled on Charlie, plus the fact that he liked to be on the winning side. And Bunker wasn't certain; he didn't think he was ready to go back in that far of that strong. And [chuckling] as though the script were written in Hollywood or somewhere (I believe Jack Walsh walked by and saw the bunch of us and gave us a greeting and returned somewhere), and right out of the, woodwork came Cliff Jones and Floyd Lamb; they'd just returned from a trip to Aruba, I think, earlier that morning. And guess he told him it was a big, high-level political conference going on. Well [chuckling] Jones and Lamb came right over and joined us for lunch. They wanted to know what was going on.

It was really an amusing session, good lunch, a lot of political "bs" that [went] back and forth. And Greenspun had pretty well put it together, and we went along for the ride to see what it was all about 'cause we had no idea who would be running on the Republican ticket [in] '62 either.

We still had in the back of our mind maybe Rex Bell'd come charging on. And, nevertheless as we left the luncheon that day we heard nothing more until Berkeley Bunker filed for lieutenant governor, did not challenge Sawyer in that primary. And after he did file, he came in the office, we talked for half an hour or forty-five minutes and [he] asked me if I honestly thought, however he put it, that the old wound had healed about his split with Carville and the people so strongly resenting it. And I said, "Well, it's been quite a few years, and should be behind you now; there're many, many new voters in the state." And I honestly thought it had, and yet when it went into the general election and this young, good-lookin' boy called Paul Laxalt as his opponent, Bunker again took a thumping. I

think it hadn't completely healed as well as I thought it had, plus the fact that I'll always say that Laxalt in that particular race gained a certain amount of sympathy vote.

He was to be Rex Bell's running mate. Rex, as we know, died fourth or fifth of July right before the campaign got going. It left him, you know, like a little boy out on a raft, I think, 'cause Laxalt had not yet prepared for his political debut, I don't believe. I recall talkin' to Rex Bell, and Rex Bell wanted to put together a ticket, and I did suggest Laxalt as a candidate for attorney general, not for lieutenant governor. And I named him two or three more, and I said, "Rex, you're gonna have to play the game the same as the Democrats do," I said, "by getting out on the football field. They wear knee pads, you wear knee pads; they wear shoulder pads, you wear shoulder pads; face masks or what it is.

He said, "Well what do you mean by that?"

"Well," I said, "you ever notice how the Democrats always manage to have just enough balance in so many Mormons, so many Catholics, so many Protestants, and the veteran angle worked into it, the lodge angle?" I said, "Maybe even one good atheist." But they have worked that, and they have worked those corners for years; and I wanted him to get—I suggested Laxalt for attorney general and suggested he find some strong Republican Mormon to go with him for lieutenant governor and that would neutralize Bunker's strength in that area. And I think Rex did try it on that basis, but with those few changes around when Paul got into this other race. But I'll always believe that a certain amount of the old Carville-Bunker dilemma was still alive, and also that Laxalt appeared to have the charm that Rex Bell had. They were gonna go together, and then his leader dropped dead. I do believe there was some certain amount of sympathy vote in it 'cause after all, Paul was

the only Republican who came through that year.

And two years later when Laxalt jumped into the big one against Howard Cannon, I thought he was bitin' off a lot more than he could chew, I honestly did, at the beginning. But when I saw the campaign he put together and the way he was going, why I said to many people, I said, "This could be a horse race yet." And he was really organized and made a terrific campaign. Well, as we all know, it ended up 48 votes different. And in the so-called recount where some got thrown out and others put back in all across the state, they just reversed the position of the figures. It turned around from 48 to 84. The first count was 48, and the recount was 84.

And it was surprising, I think, to a lot of us that did not think that Paul could give Cannon that kind of a run. And of course Cannon had been through a rough primary too. He won handily against several opponents, but he had Harry Claiborne in that race against him from the South and Bill [William A.] Galt from the North. And either one of those guys is enough to keep you awake at night [chuckling], shouting at you or sharpshooting at you. And I think that had Cannon a little shaky in that primary at that, with Claiborne really pounding on him, but didn't make that much change.

And of course Baring, while all this is going on, Walter keeps gettin' reelected to Congress. We're all laughin' about it by now because—I won't say I was the one that created the corny expression; I said it to myself before anybody else said it, not in the words they use—and not to myself—I was talkin' to a couple of fellas over in Joe's Tavern one time (I'm sure it was before Ralph Denton's time), and someone that was running—might have been John [F.] Mendoza, who also took a try at Baring—but the one wanted to know what

you really had to do to beat this fella Baring. And I said, "Well, the best thing you can do is get a lot of good Democratic-Republicans both workin' for you, and line up all your own supporters, and then go out and convert about eighty thousand voters in a block, and you might be able to take Walter 'cause Walter has no one for him. But he still holds that block of votes." Out of that has come this expression, you know, "Nobody loves Baring but the voters." And it stuck, and it held on. And that was his closest race, with Ralph Denton that year, '64. Of course, Ralph bounced right back in '66 to try it again and didn't come quite as close as he did.

These are all the statistical items and history that everybody knows. And knowing that that was a tight race, that first one, I know, and Charlie Bell—rough, tumble, no rules apply, but a terrific campaign manager if you're lookin' for a win. I think it was Charlie that time that at the last minute they nailed poor Ralph Denton with "he favors gun control." And it's like it is today. You can say a person—you get in a real liberal, intellectual-social, whatever you call it, in Reno that's havin' trouble now. What do you call these different cultural groups that are goin' broke or don't have any money [chuckling]? Those groups, particularly the ultraliberals, the pro gun control artists, they try to categorize everyone as either *for* gun control or he's *against* it. And that was Ralph's position at the time. Well, he didn't want to take guns away from every law abiding citizen, and even on gun registration, maybe handguns, but not rifles or a shotgun that a hunter uses. But it was effective; it hurt him. And I say right up to this day; you can't find a person's position—you cannot explain it in one brief sentence, any candidate's position on gun control. Now I'm death on Saturday night specials; I wish they'd wipe them out of the stores, and

you'd have to send to a government agency to buy those little handguns. A hunter's rifle or shotgun, [you] should be able to go to a sporting goods store. So to me there is a division in those things, but if I were to come out and they say, "Well, do you favor gun control?"

And I'll say, "Well not entirely."

"That's all I want to know." They'll walk away from you, and go out and say, "He's against gun control." And I wanted to punch that one in about poor Ralph and what he went through.

And then the one in '66 I remember that by this time, why the Black community, as we might call it, were pretty strongly anti-Baring. And I've always been amused there was a Black minister from Hawthorne who'd made a trip to Las Vegas for a big high-level conference, and came back. I was talkin' with him, and he hadn't been in the state too long. But he says, "I just don't understand," he says, "the state of Nevada here. We've all got the word that Mr. Denton should be our candidate, not this Mr. Baring." He says, "I was down in Las Vegas this past weekend, and I noticed," he says, "Mr. Denton's signs have been replaced in many places with Mr. Baring's signs."

And when I heard about it and the elections over, I asked Charlie Bell one time, I said, "What did it cost you to turn around the Westside?"

He said, "What are you talkin' about?"

I said, "You know damn well what I'm talkin' about. The word went out even to the boys up here that Baring isn't all that bad, and change some signs." I said, "What did it cost you Charlie?"

And he just grinned, and he said, "Oh," he said, "they always come high over there, but," he says, "I got by cheaper this time than I ever expected to." And this is a true story, and I'll

face any Black organization in the state and tell 'em so.

It's sad to ever have bloc voting. We saw it with the Indians back in the thirties, and why they always seem to run to the ministers I don't know, and of course there's quite a few of them. But, believe me, there's a lot of money [that] changes hands in these election campaigns. And the ones that'll go to the liberal conventions by quotas, goals, minority status and all, and scream for election reform and campaign reform and all, when they come back home, if the candidate goes out and say, "Well, I'd like to assist you in your project here financially, but we're not permitted to do that any more," well there's gonna be a little coolness.

If his opponent comes along and says, "Well I'm not letting anybody dictate to me whether I can help my friends or not," he comes up with some cash; makes quite a change. It is too bad. We've seen it work right in our county, but human nature bein' the strange frailty that it is, why, money does talk in an election. And unlike the old argument about the smoke-filled room and the boys down on the waterfront and all, a lot of it changes hands—you might say in church, the vestibule of the church, too. If we're ever gonna have reform, the people have to reform themselves first, and then start reforming all the laws.

And of course Sawyer, he had a little difficulty in getting his nomination for a third term because Charlie [Charles E.] Springer decided to break out that time, and so did Ted [Edward C.] Marshall from Las Vegas, but Sawyer made it with no great strain; and then came the big battle with Laxalt. And, that, as I mentioned earlier, is when the third term issue reared its head again; and there again in later talks with Sawyer himself, he says, "There's just one question I have to ask you."

(He knew I was for Laxalt.) He said, "Did you make up that corny story yourself, or did someone hand it to you?"

And I said, "What's that Grant?"

And he said, "Oh that tag end that you had on one of your damn columns," he said, "right there before election—a couple weeks before election."

"Oh," I said, "about the poor little school kids that I'm feeling so sorry for?"

He said, "Ya, that's the one."

And "No," I said, "it was my own idea and I had to strain to think of it because had I been a little more longwinded or as long-winded as I usually am at fillin' the column, that never would've appeared. But," I said, "I have so much space to fill, and I wrote what I thought was this big hard-sell pitch for Laxalt," and I said, "I had about that much space at the bottom—about an inch of space, an inch and a half." I said, "I thought, and geez I don't want to be like the minister, start givin' the sermon over again after they've already saved the souls and all. And then it flashed through my mind, and I thought this might get to be a tearjerker, whatever you want to call it."

I finished off the column by explaining the finest man in the state of Nevada or anywhere else, the finest governor the state had ever had, should himself consider the advisability of holding on to an office, from the time a little first grader learns to pronounce his name, and on the night he graduates from high school if he's asked the name of the governor, and it's the name of the same man. And I said that it's really not a good example of education in democracy. I had two or three people tell me afterwards, "Well, we thought you were just goin' down the Republican line, but," they said, "by God there is a lot to that. Kids shouldn't go all the way from first grade through high school, and not know any but one governor." And I got that in, and then

some of the papers picked it up and passed it around; and that's what Grant was referring to, whether I had made it up myself. [Chuckling] I told him it was strictly by accident, And that's how it comes out. And all the rest of the column, nineteen inches of column, probably didn't change or persuade anybody, but I got down to the last inch or inch and a half in the column, and then I came with the hearts and flowers, and it connected. [Chuckling] In fact, it kind of scared me myself a little bit to think in adult world and political world we're talkin' about a third term, third term, like Franklin [D.] Roosevelt. That's a third term for the candidate, but now for the people, and particularly the kids, and I know that two or three legislators used that same argument afterwards when we were limiting the governor to two terms, that the third term is a tendency to develop European-type thinking in our country.

In this talk, from all of Laxalt's races and all, I overlooked one fella who pretty well lucked out when Paul took Sawyer, a fellow named Ed Fike, just an average or little known assemblyman from Clark County. Got on the ticket that year with Laxalt seekin' the office of lieutenant governor, and not only was Laxalt's own strength, I think, carrying him—and I've never believed it was Fike's own selling of himself. But here again so many have forgotten, as they do very easily in a few short years, that Democratic primary race for lieutenant governor in '66 (and there again I have some of my old notes), and I wound up makin' several Democrats mad at me for tryin' to tell 'em who was gonna be the nominee. We ran two or three charts on that. We'd have John Foley (we had by 150 votes), Harley [E.] Harmon, Mike O'Callaghan, and you gotta remember Bill Flangas was in there. Oh, there was—don't know whether Gait was in there—but that whole string of Democrats all

in it. And every time you ran a new tabulation somebody moved from third to second, and I recall telling O'Callaghan that he might get into second, but I just could no way push him into first. John Foley seemed a little pleased when I told him it was lookin' like he might edge out, but may have a tough race in November. Well, he wasn't gonna worry about the tough race in November. Harley Harmon took it the hardest of all. I told him that the first one that got twenty-two percent of the vote was the winner, and Harley says, "Oh my God!" He said, "Gotta have more than twenty-two percent."

And I said, "Where you gonna get 'em Harley?"

"Well," he says, "if I can't get twenty-five percent of the vote in a race, then I'm no judge of elections in Nevada."

I says, "Harley, there's none of you—not one of you will have twenty-five percent of the vote; it's too tight and too close; it's too divided."

There was a whole string in there. I think [Victor F.] Whittelsea was in there—if [Simon W.] Conwell wasn't running, why Whittelsea was, Charlie Richards, and Bob Mortensen. We had our perennials there for years, and—I'm just gonna check that and see who *was* in that famous primary. I can't remember 'em all. I said Bill Flangas, John Foley, Bill Gait got in that one, Harley Harmon, oh, my old friend from Schurz, Herman Hereford. I remember I made him feel good—I gave him 2,000 votes statewide; he got 990. And he's another one that told me that I was terrible as a political projectionist or whatever they call me—. And O'Callaghan and Vic Whittelsea—Vic was in there. And Foley, 14,733; Harmon, 14,524; O'Callaghan, 14,419. It was so evenly divided. That had a little bit of a backfiring deal in the general, I think, and it hurt Foley because they had not healed all the wounds. That's when Pike then became state officer.

Pike had not been sworn in as lieutenant governor, when the Reno newspapers (and Vegas picked it up then too) were already ratin' him as a future candidate for governor, U.S. Senator or Congress, as they always do soon as one gets elected. They seem to think it's their obligation to tell the public, well, this man's gonna run for something higher or is gonna win something higher in the next few years, whether there was an election or not. And I recall, it was in December that year [that I] talked with Ed Pike up in Carson City. I said, "Ed, I hope you're not believin' all this 'bs' you've been reading in the newspapers, that after grabbin' this one off that you could run for U.S. Senator against Bible two years from now.

He said, "No," he said, "it doesn't hurt to get that publicity and all, but that's the last thing in my mind." Well, we know the rest [of] the story.

In two short years, the Republicans thought they had a winner on their hands and young hero, and he was a formidable campaigner, and they got him into the race. Bill [William J.] Raggio got in too late, and Pike was able to edge him out. But there again, why, we had to take to the bushes to start drummin' up a few votes for Bible, once again get excommunicated from the Republican party [chuckling].

But I think one of the funniest things (funny and yet it was serious at the time), we went to Bible headquarters in Las Vegas, large building they'd rented, but way out. If they had *one*, they had *twelve* telephones in there, and about six girls workin'. And those phones'd ring. I remember Walter Cox came in. "Christ," he says, "wouldn't it be better to have twelve girls and six telephones, than six girls and twelve telephones?" He said, "You're losin' votes by the minute."

"What do you mean?"

"Nobody's answerin' those phones; that's a good way to chase votes off. 'Any way we can help you, call our headquarters,' and you list the number; you call the number and nobody answers. And it's not on a busy line either." So Chet Smith was out at the time, and we suggested he get [Jack] Carpenter out from Washington, no matter who's runnin' the store back there, and shape up those headquarters.

We went in the back room like a storeroom, and they had these yard signs, the small ones; they had some of the big ones, the four by fours, stacked against the wall four feet out. They hadn't made any arrangements yet to put up the signs, but they paid for havin' 'em all made. Well, Walter and I both screamed about that. I remember one gal askin', "Well who are you, what's your position in this campaign?" We said [chuckling], "Just never mind, just get someone here to go to work." They were a little bit—makin' a couple of gals mad at us about it, because we were really rippin' their headquarters apart. And it was more or less in a shambles, and we didn't think that the race was all that easy.

Carpenter did come out in three or four days. He checked everything that we'd reported in to him, and he raised a little hell. And he said, "Geez, we have to *pay* someone to go out and put up those signs; let's get them up. No use having them made—spending all that money, havin' 'em sit in the back room or a warehouse."

And so that one day in the Bible headquarters, we didn't make too much of an impression on those [chuckling] girls. There was one out of the Washington office, and I had known her—worked with my daughter, and she thanked me afterwards. "Jack," she said, "I can't do it, but I'm glad someone came in and told 'em."

"Well," we said, "have 'Tennessee Ernie' [Carpenter] out in three or four days and

get this thing organized.” [Laughter] That’s what we always called Carpenter, “Tennessee Ernie.”

And she said, “Well, I wished he could get out.” And, believe me, when he got out there (‘cause Chet was trying to cover the finance end of it, raisin’ campaign funds and being two places at once), you might say that it was one of the hardest days we worked tryin’ to get headquarters for a Democratic candidate shaped up and two country clowns, Republicans [chuckling].

We ran our own polls, I think I mentioned a moment ago, and we just didn’t have enough votes in the cow counties. I said we had 2,200 or 2,500, and we were afraid of Washoe because Washoe was always rough on Bible. Bible always had a hard time in Washoe, and we sensed it and we said, “The race will have to be decided in Clark County.” And so we went down and talked to Greenspun and asked permission to—each of us write a column. And well, he was a little bit perturbed about Bible. Bible was supportin’ the Vietnam war effort, and Hank’s son was becoming of draft age. Hank had taken a pretty cool view; in fact Hank and Bible had never been too close. After all, Hank had supported Mechling that time in his race, and I’ll go back to that Mechling when we finish this. Just reminded me of another one, Hank Greenspun and Mechling [chuckling]. I don’t want to leave that one out.

But, we said, “Will you do us two favors, Hank—one, please don’t endorse Bible. Two, let us write the column.” And he agreed too. He didn’t intend to endorse him. We said “We hoped not—with the track record you’ve had” [laughing]; we didn’t particularly want him to. And we did; we wrote some more of this—real hearts and flowers, you know. “We’re the little fellows from those wilderness areas of western Nevada,” and what Bible had done for us, what

he *could* do for us and all. And it didn’t hurt any. They found that out afterwards, not that I could persuade anybody who knows Nevada politics, but there were a lot of people down in that area that didn’t know which way to vote or what. And so we got that one on.

Then we were privileged to get a sneak peek at a super-poll that Hank was running. And you read about these polls—Gallup and Harris and Wayne Pearson’s and all, and some are done by postcard. I think I told ya how Wallie [Wallace D.] Warren ran ‘em in the old days by printin’ the cards in different coloring and you’d know whether it was Republican, Independent or nonpartisan; and like the printer’s code number, it was actually a county code number, so you know which county it was comin’ back from. And they weren’t all in grab-bag poll; they were pretty selective. But he had a fella, Frank Winston, who later put a little time in in Carson City. He was an excellent writer, but he made the mistake of writin’ too often on the lower right-hand corner of some checks. And we liked the guy, but he was running one of the most effective polls we have ever seen.

He would spend two hours in one supermarket, and his pattern would be: he’d start, say, on the Westside with the heavy Black population, and then he’d go into a Mexican area; then he’d take Henderson, movin’ into the larger centers. To compare it with Reno, it’d be to work Oddie Boulevard pretty well, then get down toward Park Lane, and that’s the first time I heard the expression connected with politics, “the silk-stocking district.” Frank Winston says, “Well, I work up to the silk-stocking districts from the lowest ebb.” Then he starts takin’ his balance out of all of ‘em, and this was gonna be a super poll that would be published.

Well, I say Cox and I [chuckling] were privileged to a sneak peek at it, and contrary

to Nevada law we started doing a little betting. And we said we couldn't believe it, and Winston says, "I'll gamble everything I've got on it; it's gonna be there. Bible," he says, "will beat Fike 10,[000] to 15,000 votes in Clark County."

We said, "Oh, this is Fike's home county, Clark. Say, all they're askin' for is 5,000. The cow counties can't quite offset Washoe, and 4,500 to 5,000."

"Well you watch," he says, "see if this thing doesn't add up."

I'll be damned—in fact Walter [Cox] I think won a couple, but he was willin' to bet people that Bible would carry Clark County by 15,000 votes, which seemed fantastic. In fact we relayed the word back to Carpenter, and he says, "Are you sure? Do some rechecking on that."

We said, "This is the way this man's poll is going, and he's got a record of holding it pretty well."

Bible carried Clark by 15,114, so that Frank Winston knew how to take a poll. And it turned out just as he had 'em; he knew Bible's weak spots, knew Pike's weak spot, knew where they were runnin' pretty close. And that's the way he does it, just catchin' those people near a check-out door in the supermarket, and just sayin', you know, usually, "Excuse me, we're runnin' a poll on the election and would you care to say—" I think he put it, "would you care to say who you think will be elected?" He didn't ask 'em how they were voting. He was real smooth, "Would you care to say who you think will be elected, Senator Bible or Lieutenant Governor Pike?" or just, "Alan Bible or Ed Pike?" And he would score 'em fast. So there's a little trade secret on how to run an inexpensive poll.

I think we've done very well in Reno, I'd say. You have some good workers, put 'em out there in oh, the big Safeway area, out on

Booth Street, catch that side that west side, and they'll, say, get out on Oddie Boulevard, work down to Park Lane, get over into Sparks, and just the different income level of the area, and you can tie together a pretty good one. And I know that Hazel Erskine was rated as a top pollster and all, but in the initial setup she used, either the postcard or mimeographed questionnaire type that she would draw from it, tryin' to draw around, you know, what are first on the issues and then down to the candidates and from that deduce some pretty good average of how the voters might be leaning.

Well, of course the 1970 election was really, I won't say routine, but as the ball bounces because Mike O'Callaghan had made his entrance again, but this time not as candidate for lieutenant governor, but for governor. And I noticed that his margin was not all that great in 1970. Well, he won the primary quite easily. He had more than just Ed Pike, the lieutenant governor, now tryin' to make the comeback after losing to Bible and becoming governor. That was the year that we tried to get back in the Republican party, tell some of the so-called wheels—Edwina Pryor to Lucie Humphrey to Paul Laxalt, Wilson McGowan—that Pike didn't have it. He could not make it, and they might take a look at Bill Raggio who had been stayin' in the background pretty well. But they couldn't see it. Bill didn't quite fit in with the organized Republican group, as you might call it.

But they had a couple of questionable factors get into that race 'cause with—it wasn't just O'Callaghan and Pike; Dan Hansen jumped into it as the Independent American and polled over 5,000 votes, and Charlie Springer, this time coming out as an Independent was in that race. And he polled 6,400, almost 6,500. Now generally conceded that Hansen drawing a strong conservative

vote, probably pulled from Pike more than O'Callaghan. Springer, on the other hand, the nominal Democrat, undoubtedly was pulling away from Mike, but Mike did win it by 6,300 votes. And there again, that was pretty much a foregone conclusion, and I think it showed when the supporters got smart and put on the forty-nine or ninety-four cent chicken dinner out at Idlewild, asked all the poor people to come, meet Mike, have a good chicken dinner for less than a dollar, and enjoy it. And that's when the Republicans were puttin' on a hundred-dollar-a-plate dinner for Pike. You have to be so careful announcing that you're gonna have the hundred-dollar-a-plate dinner or the *dollar*-a-plate dinner. It has a lot of impact on people, and we could hear it.

Of course, he carried Harry Reid in with him in that race. And Reid won quite substantially over Bob Broadbent which surprised a number of us because there's a church factor there that Reid, the convert Mormon, and Broadbent, the lifelong Mormon—. One would think [they'd] rather break even in the vote, but they didn't. Reid [was] quite a runaway.

In '72 the big upset there—Bilbray over Baring, the history, 4,600 votes. And, I still think that Walter would have beaten him if he hadn't gone to the hospital. He had no choice. The way that was handled in the press—those pictures they would show on the gurney—did he have a heart attack? Was he dyin' of cancer? Had he been poisoned? They left everything to the imagination in the article. Now we must remember that Charlie Bell and Walter had split, between '70 and '72. The Bilbray team had picked up Bell and used him for the primary campaign. Had Charlie Bell been in command of Walter's campaign, I'm sure that thing would have been handled so differently. But, as I said to many people, I would have come straight out the minute he entered the

hospital and said that brought on by, not the fatigue of the campaign, but the *rigors* of the campaign and change in diet, that Walter has suffered a severe case of hemorrhoids and must undergo tests to determine, but will have to remain in the hospital a few days before resuming the campaign.

When you think of the number of voters across the state that have had piles at one time or another [laughter] , you're gonna get a lot of sympathetic votes. Then if the papers try to diagnose it as a heart attack, or say a sudden, overnight case of cancer or something else, then you come fighting back using the strong offense as the best defense, and say, "My God what else? We've told what the man has, and that's suffering enough," without havin' to shove those papers where it will hurt the most, you know, and just put it that way, and ridicule the papers right off. I think they could have backed off, but Jerry Shaffer just didn't have it.

And of course, Bilbray came out, and I told Jimmy Bilbray the following week at Gabbs the same thing I'd told Ralph Denton, that I had told Dick [Richard H.] Ham, that I had told Spike Wilson, anybody that was mentioned for—well the others did, not Spike; he was one time mentioned, but always wanting to run against Baring. I said, "The first Democrat who defeats Walter Baring is not going to Washington." I said, "I don't give a damn who it is; if Bible dropped down and knocked Baring out of the box for congressman, he wouldn't get elected. That's because there's about 42,000 hard-shell Republican votes in the state."

This fellow Roberts, he's runnin' again this year, Charles Roberts or something. No one can ever remember him running, but he ran against Baring one time. He got about 42,000 votes while Walter's gettin' 80,000 or 884000 or something, and those 42,000,

you can take on the Democratic side. I said, "You can take 100,000, but I say 50 out of the 100 are gonna be in Baring's camp, and the other 50 is gonna be at the other guy's." And as we well know, that's how [David] Towell lucked out. I call it a fluke. But they were returning Jimmy Bilbray the same kind of a compliment and not for exactly the same reason, but somewhat like they did with Bunker and Carville. It just wasn't in the cards; the first man to dump Walter could lose all those Baring votes overnight. They were too solid, both the Republican and Democrats in the Baring camp, so that I was not at all surprised two years later in '74 at Towell's defeat by Santini. Leavitt would have beaten him. I think most any of the Democratic candidates who were seekin' the nomination would have beaten him.

And the other big thing, of course, in the '74 race was Laxalt coming back after his four years of retirement, taking on Harry Reid, winning by 624 votes, another recount, and why this sudden loss of popularity of Harry Reid from four years before when he'd gone in on O'Callaghan's coattails.

And this is one we might have to date before we release it, wait till we're all around in 1980, but I'm convinced in my own mind Paul Laxalt was among the first to know that Mike O'Callaghan would not be running for U.S. Senator, would be running for reelection as governor. I think they're a little closer than it appears on surface. It's often gone through my mind, why would O'Callaghan give up almost a cinch election to the U.S. Senate, serve one more term as governor and cannot succeed himself. His only claim to professional status is a schoolteacher, and the most you can expect to get there is a salary. The lawyers, the engineers, the accountants can get pretty heavy fees. And while Mike, I think, may want to return to the field of education, by 1980

Mike's children will be pretty well grown; and he is very close to his family. And with five kids they're bound to have some spots of trouble with kids—they all do—movin' to Washington. And I think that Paul knowing he had to get a national office to do something to keep from sinking, to keep his neck above water with that Ormsby House, where he could sit across the table from those bankers and probably get a little better shake or shake his finger at them, and not bein' asked to leave the door or go out the door, you know, leave the building, rather. That naturally had a lot to do, I believe, with Paul's entry into it.

Paul, I believe, knows that in six years he could possibly make himself a prominent figure, if not a national figure; and now I think he is one. And by the return to his law practice and havin' to untangle that financial morass of the Ormsby House, might) be willin' to step down again. He did after one term as—and should he do so, I would say that Mike O'Callaghan would be our Senator. Now this is purely speculation on my part, but as I checked that whole pattern from that filing.

I also know this, that O'Callaghan did not beat the pavement for Harry Reid as strong in '74 as he did in '70, and he still has it today, a very open and frank reason, that Harry started out in the campaign, "I am my own man. I'm running my own campaign. I'm not anyone's candidate," cause the initial press reports indicated that Mike had handpicked Harry for the job. To an extent he might have tapped him on the shoulder, but I know that Mike didn't appreciate Harry implying that the governor, and no one else, is "meddling in my campaign—I'll do it my own way." And he did. And then his real boo-boo, in my opinion, was right-to-work.

Harry apparently had received such substantial contributions from labor organizations whether local unions or

COPE [Committee on Political Education] or anybody else, I don't know exactly, but he took the position that he would support repeal of Section 14-B of the Taft-Hartley law, which in effect outlaws all right-to-work states or nullifies all right-to-work law. The one major group, in my mind, that almost, say, *revolted*—they [were] just flabbergasted, was a group that he had relied upon heavily in '70, and I think was relying upon again in '74, were the Mormon voters. Now Mormons do not vote as a bloc; they showed that when Reid defeated Broadbent and in other races, where the Mormons supported Laxalt over Bunker, one of their own. And no one just gets in the corner, bring 'em—different sections of the state you [have] different leaders, and they don't always agree.

But on the issue of right-to-work, it's just something that, well, like gettin' a bunch of Catholic women all riled up over abortion, and of course, the Mormons do too get riled up over abortion, or another group on ERA. But right-to-work, when he took the stand against it—we saw it—I think the story was pretty well told right in our own little county of Mineral.

Well, I didn't have to go outside my own print shop to take a poll because I have four brothers workin' out there in the back shop, all very good straitlaced Mormon boys and I say straitlaced—they don't hit the booze; they're not social Mormons; they don't smoke; they follow their Word of Wisdom rigidly. The arguments they would have out there—one of the boys was Harry Reid's cochairman in this county, as he had been when he ran for lieutenant governor. Two of his brothers were constantly tellin' him that they thought he'd picked pretty much of' a lemon. And frankly, I discussed it with the boys and all, and they said the big issue that was gonna hurt Reid was that right-to-work. And I do know that

a number of the church women went house to house campaigning for Jim Santini and for a local candidate for district attorney, one of their own—the Santini story's a good one in itself, and they just dropped Harry Reid like a hot rock, and they didn't give him that support.

In the primary election in Mineral County, the Democratic party, Harry Reid received 13,033 votes, Maya Miller, 342, Dan Miller, 127, which should really hump him up pretty well when the general election showed up. But, by the time the general election showed up with all voting now, Republicans, miscellaneous groups, Independents, nonpartisan, Harry Reid dropped from 1,333 to 1,214. He lost ground between the primary and the general. With that many -more voting, Laxalt beat him. Laxalt had 1,306 in three and a half to one Democratic county. And Jack [C.] Doyle, of course, picked up 211, but he had offset that Dan Miller. So, to use the old corny expression, I think the die was cast when Harry put his foot in the right-to-work bucket. I merely cite that so that some future politicians wonderin' if they can brush something off, you know, with just a quick explanation—it's not easy to do.

A couple of other interesting points in that, that Jimmy Bilbray, like Bunker, tried to make another comeback running for primary for lieutenant governor and didn't make it. Sometimes you can incur permanent enemies within your own party over something like beating Baring, or Bunker beating Carville.

The one that I know a number of people missed, or paid little attention to, now where O'Callaghan won by only 6,300 votes in '70, polled 70,000, but of course in '74 he had a runaway and boosted his vote total to 114,000. But there was another interesting item in that 1974 election. That country boy from Battle Mountain [William D. Swackhamer],

who had been appointed by O'Callaghan to the office of secretary of state and now was seekin' office in the election, makin' his first statewide campaign, regarded particularly in the liberal Clark County area and some other areas as a very conservative Democrat, small-town grocer out of Battle Mountain. And served in the legislature for twenty-four years before bein' reapportioned; was supposed to be whupped in the primary by a prominent Democratic leader, Phil Carlino, whose home was in Las Vegas, who had been state chairman in the party organization for years, had it all wrapped up. Well, the first surprise came in the primary when Swackhamer not only turned back Carlino with little effort, but even took Clark County away from him.

Then in the general election, Swackhamer carried every county in the state and polled the highest vote of any candidate, 115,000; he polled about 1,000 more than O'Callaghan, his first time out, which I cite because it is very likely, when all the lawyers kick it around; the party leaders in '78 are lookin' for Democrats to succeed Mike in office, it very well could be that they might walk down the hallway and ask a little hard workin' grocery man, hardware man from Battle Mountain [chuckling] if he'd consider doin' something for the party, put his name on the ballot, and go out and win the way he did before. Swack was a real sleeper in that governor's race.

And to wind it up, I'd mentioned about Towell gettin' whupped by Santini, and I think we went into that earlier about my feud, if you want to call it that, with Jim Santini over the Constitution; and that Santini didn't agree with me and neither did the supreme court. I think they're both wrong on a judge dropping out and seeking an office. I just wish someday, someday, we could get it before the U.S. Supreme Court, not just intermediate court, to decide the issue if a

sovereign state or a state with the sovereign powers has the authority to limit and restrict the political activities of its judges while they are serving on the bench. And that's why that was put in the Constitution purposely. From the beginning of statehood they've tried to remove the judiciary from politics, first by having that provision in to make 'em stick with the' judiciary, then by making the office nonpartisan. This is what blocked McCarran from running against Pittman. Norcross took a look at it, and they didn't—they thought it would be going. And as I told Jim, I said, "Jim, if nothing else, you took an oath to uphold that Constitution, not to attack it." He said, "I know, but—."

They're riding on the old series of cases, and I have 'em all in the drawer, the domino theory. It started out in one state court and then another, that no state has the right to add any qualifications to a federal office. And that's what these courts held like ours. I said that we're not adding any qualification to a federal law. We follow the national law; we have to be of a certain age for Senator or congressman, you have to be a citizen, eighteen years old to vote (used to be twenty-one), and free from the stain of a felony or losing your rights. All those things remain the same. We haven't added anything. We merely say that before you run for a judge, you can run for U.S. Senator, congressman, anything you want; but if you run and are elected to the bench, we not only ask, but we *insist*, you stay out of any partisan political race until your term is up. And that's all our Constitution says.

Each case that comes before these state supreme courts (there's only been one in the federal court and they accepted the same reasoning that we're adding qualifications), invariably has a strong political tinge to it, 'cause I talked to Jim Santini after I'd chopped him up pretty hard in the paper, he thought.

And I said, "Well, even if he had a legal right, he doesn't have a *moral* right to run," and that kind of hit him hard. And he asked me what I referred to his morality; I said, "Because you took that oath; that's what I'm referring to, Jim."

But we agreed to have a meeting over in Minden. He was holding court in every county in the state at that time before he stepped down, gettin' ready for the race. And we tried to stay friends, and I think did. But when I met him over there in the court chambers in Minden and talkin' to him about the whole thing and why, and I said, "Nothin' personal in this. I like you personally; I think you've got a good future ahead of you, but I'll never budge one inch from my belief on this Constitutional prohibition or inhibition, whichever you care to call it." And I said, "Because you're a living example, Jim. People are sayin', 'Now you walk into Santini's court; he's gonna ask you how do you plead and how are you registered?'" [Chuckling]

And he chuckled about that for the time being, you know. He said he knew it. "Well," he says, "if this court should agree with you (I'll grant ya there's merit to the arguments on both sides), then I'm not staying as district judge without a race. I'm filing for supreme court justice."

And I says, "You're not gonna take on John [C.] Mowbray, are you, from you own county?"

"No," he says, "I'll file against Thompson." He was referring to Gordon Thompson. So Jim had that court pretty well scared. "You deny me the right to run for Congress—try to deny me the right to run against you," which they couldn't do. They couldn't do that. So, as I say, there's always a little political overtone in some of those. But I wanted to get in a final punch about people referring to a "Mormon bloc" or a "Mormon vote." I

speak now, I say, of the active Mormon church people here, who do take a very great interest in the elections. They don't do it secretly or anything, no, heavens; they have their meetings up there, and several come here and talk to me. The boys who work for me, talk to me trying to find out who they think are the better candidates, and no one is compelled to vote that way. But still and all they do have influence. So when Santini came to town, flew in the day after the primary election (he'd won it), he called me [to] Joe's Tavern, says, "Come on over, I'm havin' pizza pie and have a glass of beer. And I said, "I'll be right over." Wednesday the paper's out, so I went over and we got talkin'. And he said, "My God, I knew you'd try to shoot me out of the water in court, but I didn't think you'd do it in the ballot box." And I said, "What do you mean?" He says, "I took a pretty good drubbin' from Leavitt here in Mineral County."

I said, "Jim, don't look at me on that," I says, "why did you think you could take Myron Leavitt in this county?"

"Well, why not?" he says, "There's lots of friends and all."

And I said, "Well first I'll tell ya—too many in two groups brought you in second."

He said, "What's that?" They still had signs up on the wall, Carlino, Santini, and this is in Joe Viani's place, and there was somebody else in there—it wasn't [Michael] Mirabelli, somebody else—.

"Look it," I says, "too much Mafia and up on the other side of town, too many Mormons." And his wife's sittin' there; and his wife's a very good Mormon. Her dad is not only a former bishop, but what they term a patriarch, you know, like a stake president, one of their real elder elders and all. And I says, "I think 'Sundown' [W. B.] Wells summed it up pretty well when he agreed with me that Leavitt would carry Mineral County

because as Sundown said, ‘Santini is only a galvanized Mormon; Leavitt’s a bona fide.’”

And Santini’s wife, Ann [chuckling], looked at me, and she says, “*What* did you say?”

I said, “I didn’t say it; Sundown said it.”

“Wait’ll I see that Sundown,” she says.

I told her that’s what he says, “Jim’s only a galvanized Mormon.” And we got to laughin’.

She said, “Well seriously, Jack, I’ve been listening. I agree with what you say; I can see where Myron could make quite an impression on people. But who do I see?”

Well I told ‘em to come over and talk with Tony; they did, and he arranged to have ‘em meet the local bishop. And I said, “Don’t send this ‘dago’ up there.” I said, “He’ll probably light a cigarette or ask for a glass of beer. let him work this side out.” I said, “You should come in, Ann, meet with some of the women and the Relief Society, then ask if they could set up some evening meeting with both the men and women, and have your dad come in and talk to ‘em.” They did both those things. The women went out house to house for Jim Santini. But they forgot Harry Reid because of the right-to-work issue. I know that some of those who were out rootin’ for Santini, still had Laxalt buttons on. So when people say that the Catholics vote as a bloc, the Mormons vote as a bloc, or even the Baptists—it’s a lot of bunk because there was a very fine example right there that they’ll vote as a bloc only if they have an issue, not if they have a brother or sister running, but if they have an *issue* they’ll vote as a bloc; other than that, why, it’s every man for himself.

DEATH OF PATRICK MCCARRAN

Touching on the McCarran death, I know the book that Sister Margaret’s sister, the other one [Mary Mercy], that was in the Holy

Names order and then dropped out and then had this Ruth Montgomery in Washington write a book. I was always disappointed in that book; they were careless in the facts; if they didn’t have facts, you know, they filled in something. And it did not happen at all the way she describes in the book.

They had one of these usual rallies right after a primary, “Unite the ticket, come to Hawthorne, free beer and a hot dog,” or something, after you listen to them speak. And they had a big hoedown at the civic center, as we call it, the old USO building. And they paraded down main street in open cars, McCarran wavin’, Pittman wavin’. Whether that open air (and there was a little chill in the air in September) had any effect, some thought it might have.

I had my own version of the strain on McCarran’s heart. As he entered the hall, I was in there with Hank Barlow, old Republican buddy of mine. You know there’s so few Republicans in Mineral County, why, we try [chuckling] to stay close together once in a while, but staunch supporters of McCarran’s, and McCarran was greeting ‘em. And his greeting, incidentally, was one of the smoothest, “Hello there” and “Hi there, I’m Pat McCarran.” He never put the Senator in front of it—”I’m Pat McCarran.”

But then the one being greeted would say, “Oh you’re *Senator* McCarran,” seemed to build up the ego of the voter a little bit for knowing.

But McCarran was always careful and avoided used of his own name in speech. I remember when he used, “your junior Senator” and “your senior Senator.” He was a past master at the timing and the use of the words. But he walked over and he said to Hank Barlow and myself, “I’d like to talk to you boys right after this is over.

And we said, “Surely, Pat, out here?”

“Well,” he said, “we can drive uptown somewhere.”

We stayed at the back of the hall, not just 'cause we were Republicans, but the place was jam-packed. The Democrats had put on a real show that night. And I was sitting on the—oh, it was like a Ping-Pong table, one of those black onyx (whatever they're on) tops that they have at the old USO buildings, back against the wall 'cause I noticed these. I was sitting up on that (feet got to hurting a little bit), and sitting next to me was Chet [Chester] Smith. Chet, as we know, [has] been quite a prominent man in Nevada, was a youthful editor of the *Humboldt Star*. After returning from service, he went to work for McCarran on McCarran's staff, and committee staffs.

When Charlie was governor, Chet came back to Carson to work with Charlie; although a staunch Democrat, he and Charlie were very close. And then after Charlie's defeat—. No, it wasn't after his defeat. I think he'd left then to finish his law school. That's what it was. But Chet was sitting next to me 'cause he was traveling with McCarran at the time. And I recall McCarran endorsing Vail Pittman, Walter Baring, Jim Ryan, Harvey Dickerson, and it always seems to me there was a fifth one on there. Right down the line givin' 'em his endorsement, and I turned to Chet and said, “Chet, if he doesn't stop it, he's gonna choke to death. He won't vote for a damn one of 'em, and you know it.” [Chuckling]

And Chet kinda grinned and, “Ya, I know what you mean.”

Well, of course, then it happened. He did complete his speech, and someone else spoke briefly after that. But they said on the stage, he went for a little silver case, for his Nitro or dynamite or whatever you call it, for the heart condition. When leaving the stage down that dinky little narrow, twisting stairway to get down onto the main floor, he did make

it down off the stairs, and had walked, oh, several feet, when he went down with a real thump. In fact, he still had the little medicinal silver case with the Nitro pills or whatever, still in his hand because a woman picked it up and held onto it. Took us quite a while to find out who had it; in fact, Mrs. McCarran, the widow, asked me in Reno if I could help locate that—thought that should be something in the family and not be scattered around. We did, but it took quite a little time to recover the little case sometime after his death.

Of course, right away people crowded around, and there was a nurse in the hall at the time and she kept tellin' 'em to get back, give the man some air and said, “Try to get a doctor.” Well, they used the phone once to locate where Dr. Hansen might be, and I think Hank Barlow took off up the Street. And Johnny Koontz made the first call into Reno, and I don't know whether he put that first call to Eva Adams or to Joe McDonald, someone, sayin', you know, to get together up there and go notify Mrs. McCarran.

I ran, let's see, one, two—I ran five blocks. There was no point in trying to find your car; everything was crowded and you couldn't get in or out. I ran five blocks to get a Catholic priest, and then when I got to the little church rectory over there, parochial residence as the Irish used to call it, there was no priest there. Our regular priest, Father Hugh Smith, was visiting in Ireland at the time; his brother Paddy who lived with him here was at home, and we had a little English priest, just an interim while Father Smith was on vacation. And I told Paddy what had happened, and he says, “Oh my God, I think you can locate him (the priest) in Babbitt. He left a number here.”

We called out to Babbitt, and—I'm tryin' to think of his name; it was a typical little English name—. He drove a Canadian-made car, and we just kind of missed it somewhere,

you know, holding down our Papist parish, but this way—Condon was his name, Father Condon. And I called on the phone—I told him to please come; Senator McCarran had collapsed and he might be gone, and would need the last rites. And the priest says, “Well, is he a Catholic?”

Well, I said, “I think he is. I’ve seen him at Mass many times with his wife. And he has two daughters who are nuns, and I think he can pass as one. Will *you please* come?”

“Well just as soon as I can make it.” And he didn’t seem to be in too much of a hurry; it took him quite a little time to get up from Babbitt. And he [chuckling] left Hawthorne, leaving me with a bad taste in my mouth, for English priests. Let them have theirs, and we’ll keep ours, you know. But he *did* get there in time to give the last rites. And of course, then they brought the Navy ambulance up, removed the body, and took it from Hawthorne to Reno. And I’m not privy to the records of funeral parlors in Reno, but Chet Smith said he had the complete request of McCarran, what he wanted done.

Chet then, when he could get to the phone, called Walton Funeral Home, and they were going to send out a rig, a hearse. The communications moved rapidly then, and of course, Joe McDonald was always a real close buddy of Si [Silas Earl] Ross from college days, but a turnaround came there; Waltons called and said they understand there’d been a change made in their plans, and Ross-Burke would handle it. And they arranged for the Navy ambulance to take the body into Reno, and I asked Chet Smith, I said, “My God, even at a time like this, they’ll battle?” Well, Chet told me that, I guess, when Waltons first got going in Reno, I believe, Norman Biltz, he told me, I think Pat McCarran, two or three, they had a little money in it. So naturally he wanted to patronize his own firm, but he didn’t get a chance to.

I asked Joe McDonald about it some time later, and Joe brushed it off in that gruff way of his. “What the hell difference it make to you?” he says, “The oldest, most prestigious mortuary here,” and he said, “that’s what the family wanted.” He said, “I talked to ‘em, and that’s what the family wanted.” So, you stop arguin’ at a time like that. But it was kind of an unusual twist to me [chuckling] to see that you can’t always have your choice even of which casket you’re gonna crawl into! Although they handled it very well, and there was nothing wrong; it was just one case. But I guess the handling of a U.S. Senator and the like, had a lot to do with it. I repeat that the one book that had been published and there have been two or three versions of the death, but that *is* the way that it happened.

Now I do believe that Sister Margaret, if she hasn’t already, will come out someday with a far more accurate description of, you know, her dad’s last night. I know she spent time here in my office, checkin’ the paper. She wanted each little detail out of that. So Sister Margaret has taken time to research it. I told her about the book not being that accurate.

LOBBYING

As to the lobbying, I was not a lobbyist in the 1977 session, did not register under the new lobbying act, which I believe turned out to be one more monstrosity. So many times when we put the word *reform* in front of it, as I’ve said previously, the cure becomes worse than the ailment.

The point in the law that amused me and why I did not register as a lobbyist and assured the county that I was to analyze the bills—they make up their own mind—and if by chance I happen to run into an assemblyman or senator somewhere outside the legislative building, I certainly

would convey their wishes on the matter, and possibly try to persuade 'em which is totally legal, because the law reads "outside the committee room within the building." I might have been nailed for usin' the porch of the legislative building, but if you stand as we are today in Hawthorne with rain dripping down upon you, it shouldn't be too difficult to prove you're not inside the building.

The thing that worked in my favor was "No smoking" signs. It seemed whatever floor I was on or whatever room I happened to walk into and decided I wanted to light my pipe, there were the large "No smoking" signs. So I studied them carefully; then I would just—say, by chance, the legislators would stop to talk, and frequently they'll ask the opinion of citizens, laymen, taxpayers like myself. And I would point to the sign and say, "If you don't mind, I'd like to light my pipe and I can't; let's walk over there on the side of the porch." I'd get 'em outside the building; then I'd fire my best shots [laughter].

As friendly as Swackhamer and I have been for many years, he did—he had a couple of fellas tailing me; and it was a friendly contest. And Swack said, "Well I'm gonna get you one way or another, waitin' (just for the sport of it) for one slip, and," he said, "see if I can't get you over before Tom [Thomas] Davis who's the justice of the peace in Carson City, and see if he won't fine ya five dollars [laughing] for failing to heed the stop sign.

I went through this more than one hundred days when I—I wasn't up there continually; I don't want to imply that—but made, oh, eight or nine trips to Carson during the session, and which is one of my greatest pastimes, is talkin'. I assure you that [chuckling] I did not remain silent under Miranda rule or otherwise. And I think in

two or three instances I had some degree of success.

My most disappointing failure in this last session [1977] was the passage of a bill giving jurisdiction to the Commission on Judicial Discipline, recently organized under the 1976 constitutional amendment approved by the people, largely of Clark and Washoe counties. The wiser voters in the small counties rejected the silly thing, and I'm thankful for that, but extending the authority of that commission to give them jurisdiction over justices of the peace and municipal judges was never mentioned when the people voted on the constitutional amendment.

I had that bill junked, I thought, pulled off the board and on the chief clerk's desk in the assembly after the senate had quickly passed it without givin' it any thought, study—couldn't have in the brief time after it was introduced [and] they got it through—but in the closing days I was shot down, I'm convinced in part, by my own artillery, lobbyists coming across from the supreme court, not the judges themselves, but through staff members, calls made around the state to a number of justices of the peace saying that this was very important to them to upgrade their office, to give 'em greater protection. They in turn called their representatives; and as I say, the Thursday before the session ended that late Sunday night and all, they put enough heat on, that it was pulled off the chief clerk's desk and sailed right through the assembly, and the governor signed it.

Mike [O'Callaghan] told me he was hesitant to use the power of the veto. I told him he was signing what I considered the most deceptive piece of legislation to come out of the 1977 [session]. They were deceiving the voters, deceiving the public, because in the general election the public was asked to vote—the public, the voters were asked

to approve or not approve a constitutional amendment creating this Commission on Judicial Discipline to censure, remove, or retire any supreme court justice or district judge from office. It was never at any time talked about, publicized, discussed, that I know of, that the lesser courts, the part-time justices of the peace who were for the most part, not attorneys, and just the little neighborhood judge, as you might call it, were to ever be included in this.

I challenged our old court administrator, John DeGraf, on that basis that it not only is deception, but I thought that they were goin' far beyond authority given in the Constitution by this amendment. He chose to hang his hat on those words at the very end of the amendment, "or such other powers as may be granted by the legislature." And as the legislature didn't realize what they were doing, I don't think these poor JPs realized because someone's always going to be complaining about a JP; we are going to spend a lot of taxpayers' money and a lot of people's time weighing every complaint against a justice of the peace or a municipal judge.

As I argued and at first I thought I had prevailed; "Let's try this commission for two years. Let's see if we're gonna be worth a damn." We might turn out to be an Edsel. Back in the twenties when Buick came out with a smaller car called a Marquette and it was ridiculed as the "pregnant Buick." We might [chuckling] turn out to be something along the line of an Edsel or a Marquette, so I wanted to see whether we could really function sensibly, contribute anything to the betterment of justice in Nevada in handling whatever might come before us in a period of two years in relation to supreme court justices and district judges. *Then* it might have been logical to rope in the poor old JPs, the poor young JPs, and the "muni" judges.

Now that was one of the highlights, as I say, of the '77 session and my non-lobbying and my unsuccessful enlightenment I'll call it. [Chuckling] I don't use the word "lobbying."

On this subject of lobbying, I got into that as a matter of self-defense and survival in 1933, and I think you already have that on tape where—to just quickly review it, summarize it, whatever you care to call it, when we started the *Independent*—the late Scoop Connors and myself. And the Nevada state legislature was in session in that year of '33, and they had before them a bill which would require a newspaper to be published and printed in whole or in part in the county for a period of two years before it could accept any legal publication. Until then it was one year, and there again we were responsible when the 1931 session had increased it from six months to one year; and we were the ones that outlasted the one-year period with the old *Hawthorne News*, didn't own that one. And I had to borrow or run credit or anything else to get up to Carson and talk to more than our own representatives and others, to stall that thing until after we got our first issue out on March first, and insure that it could not be an *ex post facto* law or in any way made retroactive. And I was able to insure that we would not come under the two-year period.

Then watching that, and as I say at that time, I was the ugly duckling insofar as the Nevada State Press Association was concerned for stalling and jamming it and puttin' up various arguments, to make certain that the law had not been passed and signed before we had our first issue off the press. But the bill did pass, and it still remains that two years or 104 weeks—there's different descriptions in the law for weeklies, dailies, and the bi-weekly papers and so on.

The next year we were into a number of issues in Mineral County, had lots of political

fighting going on then, and we would choose up sides. And here again I was either acting as an individual or in concert with, you might call it, with one political faction coming out of Hawthorne or Mineral County, 'cause some was over the river and I had gone into that part about why we chopped off part of Mineral County and gave it to Lyon, all those things. Well then, it just seemed to grow.

Then by 1937, I was active in the Press Association. I'm sure I was secretary at the time. And just more by habit than anything else, Walter Cox from Yerington who had the *Mason Valley News*, who had served in the 1929 legislative session, and I think was itchin' to get back in politics, had been a city councilman; we took it upon ourselves to become the unofficial amateur lobbyists for the Press Association. And like Topsy, it just grew and grew.

We stayed with it through all those years, and the most we ever got from the generous, fearless newspaper publishers was some telephone expenses once in a while and possibly one (no, I don't know if they ever paid for meals or room and board), maybe twenty-five, fifty dollars expense, never a salary of any kind. And then through the years of building up and meeting and eventually becoming acquainted with virtually every member of the senate and the assembly almost on a first name basis. As soon as the new ones come in, we made it a point to get well acquainted with them; and it just became like "01' Man River," we'd roll along with them.

I mentioned along about '37 or '38, just got into this on a amateur, fun basis to a large extent, at the same time tryin' to protect the interest of the newspapers because we were always a target for any legislator, any board of county commissioners, or some other public official who'd had his tail skinned in some editorial. His law of retribution was, "Well,

let's eliminate the requirement, we'll publish this; let's eliminate the requirement, we'll publish that. We'll cut off their water right at the county treasurer's office—chop off the pocketbook." So we grew with it. And then Walter did go to the senate himself in '40, and reelected in '44, lost to Fred Strosnider in '48. With the exception of the war period (I was gone for two years), we kept it up and became more or less a pair. Some called us the "Gold Dust Twins," a title, I later dubbed on Harry [M.] Reid and Dick [Richard] Bryan when they first came to the legislature. Snowy Monroe constantly referred to us as the "two country clowns." And because ironically Snowy would be the only newspaperman serving in either house, we wouldn't bother lobbying him at all, and didn't bother to give him the time of the day; in fact sometimes we were on the opposite side of a lot of his bills, not related to newspapers, and we built up our "stable," as we always called it. You have to have the horses if you're gonna get the bills passed. We built up our stable, leaving Monroe out of it. We remained friends through the years, but never close or working in any way with Snowy on a lot of those lobbying efforts.

We continued right on up, oh, until '75, 1975, where I got into this deal that I handled for the county this year, and that's a one-and-only one-time proposition. I was the one who spotted in the middle of all of the complicated legislation involving consolidation of government in Clark County—I say I was the one who spotted it; maybe that sounds too much "big I am," but I mean at least I was among those who spotted what was happening to the unincorporated towns throughout the state and quite naturally had something to say about it.

I got talking, I got screaming, I got writing in the paper; and my own county, Mineral County, asked me to take time out and go

lobby in any way, shape, or form, foul or fair, to kill those two obnoxious bills. One was Senate Bill 491, and I'll have to refer to the exact title of it so I won't get contradicted later on that, because it was a very bitter fight at the end. The simple title says, "Revises unincorporated town government law," and then Senate Bill SOS, "Removes unincorporated towns from local government finance laws," meaning that was the end of it. We no longer had the status of bein' a municipality. That's what started that whole deal of me tryin' to work closer with my county.

While both those bills passed the senate, we were able to "deep six" them on the assembly side. And that's when Jean Ford practically cried, in fact challenged me on it. The one that removed them from, well, the status of bein' a municipality, that had to stay dead. And that's when she came and asked if some amendments were put on, could we compromise. We agreed to retain the title and the effective date on the end. What had been in between had certainly been removed before we agreed, and I say we, because we really had the horses in that committee on government affairs. In fact, Jean was voted down six to one on 505 and then on this 491 unless it could be totally amended.

This year we watched it, and only one bill came through that might have affected us. But we certainly were on guard (I think it was Senate Bill 180) making certain that anything they wanted to do with the unincorporated towns in Clark County, was Clark County's family feud. But to use the old, tired expression of "keep your cotton pickin' hands off," anything north of Pahrump including Pahrump, Beatty, Tonopah, Manhattan, Round Mountain, Hawthorne, Minden, Gardnerville, because we are unincorporated towns and are municipalities just the same as a city—the right to sue and be sued, the right to issue bonds and

incur certain debts—separate entities from the unincorporated areas of a county.

Now I may be digressing from the county position I had, but to show how it worked out, we claimed conflict of interest. Cox is on the Gaming Commission and should not be lobbying, and that's a very serious thing where he is. This two-bit, one-shot professional consultant—call it what you may [chuckling]—I was doin' for the county, nevertheless, could run into a conflict, and it did once or twice.

In 1976 our Press convention elected Joe Jackson as secretary-treasurer because Ted [Theodore] Conover had served notice that he was taking sabbatical leave and would not be able to continue the service as secretary, and that had become virtually like the royal family of England; you get a certain title and you marry a certain gal or something, clear back to [Alfred L.] Higginbotham's days. The director of the school of journalism had served as the secretary of the Nevada State Press Association which, frankly in many ways, was one of the most flagrant conflict-of-interest setups I have ever seen.

We didn't know whether the Press Association was lobbying for the school of journalism, or the school of journalism, in its highly professional way, was letting us down when we needed some good gutter fighters; and so we decided to go outside the school of journalism, and Joe was retired and had the time. He took the job. He went to the session this year, first time in his life ever as a lobbyist; he'd been covering the legislature for more than thirty years as a skilled observer, reporter, writer. [Chuckling] He admitted that if every change happened—he says he had his shoes on the opposite feet and everything else. [Chuckling] It [was] totally new. He'd—well he'd come off the tennis court as a victor, and now he decided to get into the pro golf

tournament, and he found he was playing an entirely different ball game. But explaining why we made the big switch and the cut, or how I dropped out in '77 after forty years as the amateur lobbyist, as I called it.

Incidentally, one of the few compliments ever paid to me was by a strong opponent, Flora Dungan—God rest her soul! Oh, she'd give us a bad time up there on legislative bills. And one time in Vegas at some kind of a joint gathering and a question came up about—she referred to Cox and myself as—I don't remember the descriptive—something about lobbyist. I think the word *damn* got into it somewhere, and I says, "Flora, at least be fair. We're only amateur lobbyists."

And she said, "Well by damn, if you two are amateurs, I hope they don't start sendin' some professionals in your place!" [Laughing] And I considered it kind of a compliment comin' from Flora because we would tangle on bills, and we'd battle back and forth.

My first experience with real top-notch lobbyists was Ray [Raymond] Marks for the Southern Pacific. I think he followed "Blackie" [Charles C.] Wallace. Then of course he took Ollie [Oliver A.] Thomas in, worked his system around. Ollie brought in Carl Soderblom who is now retired.

Wallie Warren, now one of the seniors and considered one of the top men, pretty well schooled by Johnny [John V.] Mueller, and they just seem to pass it down. And I can see now the young fellas, Tom-Jones, Bell Tel, [Gino] Del Carlo workin' with the bank. I don't like to say the *older* fellows 'cause they're all in my age bracket, but [chuckling] the ones who know their times are numbered, are bringin' those younger fellows along.

But there's such variation in lobbying because they can work together as a group when they have a common interest. Private enterprise, which I'm in private enterprise,

and there's times when we get together and all help on something that'd be damaging. They had one bill—well, each year so many bills go in on Nevada Industrial Insurance that could certainly break me as a small business, and the cost of utility services have to soar. It's somewhat similar to what we know as the government BBC (Bureau of Employment Compensation), and that will have to come at a later date to show you the flagrant abuses in that, on such things as a common—I'm not gonna say common cause, but common ground because it might be misconstrued with the national outfit that has the misleading title of Common Cause, which has always galled me because they say we are the people's lobbyists. But which people are they lobbying for and what is their common cause? Some of them have very special causes, not common [laughing]. But, once they are trained, so to speak, the first job naturally is to get acquainted with your legislators. You have to win their confidence, and you have to do favors; I don't mean financially. I don't mean sending a pen or pencil set or a fifth of whiskey. And the thing that many purists and reformers dislike is what we call horse trading, and you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours.

Many times, I have had legislators ask me to speak to my own representative. They said, "We can't seem to pull him over, or get him to go with us, and we think it's a very good bill, and we understand that you're pretty much in agreement with our position." If I say yes, then, "Well, will you please talk to your own senator, your own assemblyman as one of his constituents." And it just—oh, something like the multiplication tables; after you get into the simple ones or going from, we'll say, a plane geometry to solid geometry, through the years it just works in, of the things that are concerning the legislators themselves. You have to learn to spot the real phonies,

and never ask a favor of 'em, never, because contrary to belief that the lobbyists are the ones who always want to pick up their markers, some of those legislators, if they do one favor for you, they expect *unlimited* publicity. And they helped me get an appointment, "I did a favor for you in the last legislature." Just as bad as the lobbyists! I'm not sayin' *all*, but when you get an inspiring, self-serving legislator, why, alongside of him even the worst lobbyist could be a gentleman [chuckling].

It's very difficult to explain, as you say, and each one seems to learn his own game. It's something like, well, we'll say golf. The pro gives you a few lessons, how to, you know, hold your club, how to keep your head down, place your feet, your stance; from there on it's pretty much how you develop your own game. If you got a hook or a slice, you learn fast to correct that hook and slice; and if you're not a power hitter and can't get the long ball, you go ahead and poke along till you get to the green, and then try to make up for it with some good putts. That's about as homely an analogy as I can give you on this lobbying-bit, because, [as] I say, here I've spent virtually a lifetime and never really considered myself a lobbyist in the sense of those who go over as paid lobbyists full-time retained by various businesses, groups.

Oh good heavens, it's hard to define what is a special interest. Strangely enough, the amount of money spent in behalf of ERA showed that a group of women who detest special interest groups, strongly in favor of reform, without realizing it, allowed themselves to grow into a very, very special interest group in which they wanted their piece of legislation considered first, foremost, supreme. And all the rest, the problems of the state, you know, you can keep 'em on the back burner or the shelf. And I don't blame them; they had a cause, and they fought for it, but

believe me—and they were tough lobbyists—but on that one particular issue, they were just as much special interest as anybody else. It's a cliché—"special interest."

Just this morning I read in the paper that Senator [Harry F.] Byrd has advised President Carter that the consumer protection agency bill is gone for this session, and I'm very pleased. I have yet to have anyone explain to me who is not a consumer, what consumer is gonna be protected by this, in what way and to what extent; and they set up another super government bureau. But I've often used this comparison, that, am I as a consumer bein' protected when I have to pay two cents a gallon more for unleaded gas than I have to pay for regular which has lead in it, because a great consumer advocate, Ralph Nader, with his power and his pressure forced the automobile industry to build the damned automobiles in such a way (and of which I have one—the car we wanted), we are told what kind of gasoline we can buy; and that is unleaded gasoline and paying two cents a gallon more than the regular.

I'm not going to say whether I have or have not had an accident with that throat to the gas tank which now *might* permit the hose from a regular gas pump to be used to fill my tank. There again, as I say, *what* consumer? I'm very serious about this! If we turn out a bad printing job, we naturally have to make it good right away because our mistakes are in black and white. And others will complain about the undertaker, mortician, as they call 'em now, funeral director, ripping the public off. And yet I've known in many cases where the morticians never collected a dime for some funeral. They used to say at the Mayo Clinic, you know, that those who couldn't pay could still go, and those who could well afford to pay helped to pay for the others. There are many businesses that operate on that basis, some

with high professional standards, others with a license to steal. That's human nature, in any line of business, and that's what I can't get through my noodle, is who is going to be classed as the consumer and who is the vendor. And I'm off the subject of lobbying to an extent, but I try to draw it clear over to, and all through our everyday life now, because to so many (with Congress in session almost the year around), it's a game [of] the pot callin' the kettle black. And I'll just wind up on that consumer kick that I got into with—this way: that I certainly would hate to live in a country in which all of Ralph Nader's ideas were enacted into law.

This morning's paper has the wrangle going between John Vergiels, an educator from Clark County serving in the legislature, and Dan [David] Hansen, I believe. This is the one Hansen that is also an educator, vice-principal in Reno, but serves on the state Board of Education. And I just hope, well say, from sixth grade up or even eighth graders read well enough and take time to read what the adults are tryin' to require them [chuckling] to do in this competency test, which, good heavens, we need some kind of a test. But it's so amusing to me that I wonder if the educators shouldn't be required to take the test first before they can serve on the board to establish the test, or then to judge it. And [chuckling] I'm serious about that because some of those educators and others had a bill in the session; they actually introduced a bill (and I don't know whether they passed it; I'll check because I didn't even fire and fall back—I just fell back) which would provide for an entrance examination for underage children entering kindergarten. If [chuckling] they had not reached that required age of five, the parents could request the local school board, who in turn had to obtain permission of the state Board of Education to give this little tyke—. And one of the words they used

in it—I don't know whether it was *ability to learn*, but they also used that the test be to determine the *maturity* of the child that was under five. I thought, oh, forgive them, oh Father, they know not what they do! These poor little kids going to have to take an entrance [test]. Not required of all of them, but this is for the pushy parents who don't want to be babysitters for their own child and want to get 'em in ahead of time.

Now we know that the children all have different degrees of learning, and we learned it in our own family. Our younger daughter whose birthday is December thirteenth, entered school one year after her sister (two years older) whose birthday came on January the eighth and *had* to wait until the following September. We mistakenly allowed ours to enter the first grade. She spent two years in the first grade. We gained nothing. We've always been sorry for that. It's not fair to the little kids, and that's why they kept pushing it backward from December to November to October to September. There has to be a cutoff date. If you don't have a cutoff date somewhere, well, then some people will be sayin' , "Oh, we have a real brilliant child over here in the Head Start Program; she's only three and a half, but we want to get her in kindergarten. Now you set up all the machinery, and you give a test." Life is so short anyhow, and those poor little kids are the pawns in my opinion. And I wanted to throw that one in when I mentioned about the current news, and some of the foolish things that can come out of the legislature.

TAXES

My beginning, I guess, in this matter of not bein' opposed to a sales tax, goin' back, was in the thirties. What concerned me during the Depression years was the number of people who lost property, their homes,

a cabin, mining equipment, for failure to pay taxes. And I didn't own any property to amount to anything in those days—oh, a couple lots where our print shop was. Didn't have a home or anything—or didn't have a home yet; put it that way. But I could see the danger and the punishment to property owners. And I call it punishment. They would go out, add a little fence around their yard; they'd get a few dollars together, would put an addition on the house. Not the initial cost, but forever afterward, it'd raise the valuation of that property, and they were paying, paying, paying. It just caused a fear in my mind that someday we might kill the goose, as we called, it, by taxing people out of their homes.

And believe me, over in California there's a number of 'em who have found that it was that way. And I had done some reading, and back in those days, I recall, they were proposing a transaction tax, even as a substitute for an income tax. Whether that would have served I don't argue, or couldn't have done the entire job, but the transaction tax was originally intended to be placed on the item from the moment it left the factory or its original source and then passed on. Good heavens, the federal government's been doin' it for years—tire tax, any number of things that the federal sales tax is in there, but never called a sales tax and never noticed. And even the middle man had to pay it when he put in his supply, and of course that was the end price, and so on. And that was one of the things that got me started on this idea of a sales tax.

I saw so many transients come in, make big money—wasn't so big at the initial construction of the ammunition depot, but as the second phase started there, I know, in '39—would come in, the high salaried, high waged, the construction industry. We saw people bring trailers in, sell them, take the money, all of it leaving Hawthorne, and in many instances

leaving the state. And yet during the period they were here, the state of Nevada was responsible for providing services in our county and our county schools, and it just hit me that there was something wrong with that system that the local property owner couldn't run, couldn't hide, and when money was needed they'd raise the property tax, raise the property tax.

And as I saw the build-up and the heavy construction and this was just a few years prior to World War II, and the money that was bein' passed around and thrown around! I recall talking to Ted Carville about it at the time. I think it was either when he was running the first time in '38 or after he'd been elected to the first term, and told him what a big relief it would be to the state and to our counties, if we had a sales tax. And well, the mood of the people was just such that you didn't talk sales tax in those days, we know. It wasn't too many years later when Pete Burke, I believe, was speaker of the assembly when they pulled the surprise and almost put it across. And it didn't go in that time. That was, what, about '51 or '53 session. Of course, we did get it on in '55.

And I was disappointed in the way the sales tax was finally enacted. I favored three percent, but exempt the foods—foods and drugs, knowing that those were things that everyone had to have. And why I preferred the higher base rate, my argument against the contention that it was a tax on the poor people or the little man and all. And I said, "Baloney! If the fells with a lotta dough can afford that Cadillac, then he's gonna buy it for prestige, and maybe buy his wife an inexpensive fur coat and his girlfriend a mink stole," I said, "Go after him!" That fellow with the dough, we're gonna get three percent every time he throws some of those big dollars away. And the so-called little people, a lot of theirs, not a lot, but a percentage is spent on luxury, and

they have to make the decision if they want the higher priced luxury, they pay a little more sales tax, not on their food or drug.

And we debated that pretty strongly up there. I argued with Keith Mount who was our own assemblyman at the time. I had a hell of an argument with Forest Lovelock when they started ringin' in certain exemptions, and my big argument with Forest was he was lookin' after the oil industry pretty well, National Coal and the others. And my bitterness—and I was bitter about it—stemmed from this: first of all the tax applies if heating oil is sold to a business, not to the home. That's the first discrimination I saw, but the big thing is that clause in there that if the gas (speakin' of gas now) comes through a pipeline and goes to a residence or a business—either way—no tax. But if it's bottled gas, the liquefied petroleum, sold in a bottle, it is taxed. So we found ourselves payin' sales tax on an item in Hawthorne that they weren't bein' taxed for in Reno. There was number one.

They come in with another ridiculous exemption that if a merchant sells a bale of hay to be fed to milk cows, it's not taxable. If it's sold for a riding horse, it is taxable. You tax flower seeds for your garden, but if it's vegetable seeds, they're not supposed to be taxed. Well, they had some of the most asinine exemptions and most are still in there.

The beef I had with Keith Mount, on the thing that they had overlooked taxing hotel and motel rooms, including that in the sales tax. And the answer was that Newt Crumley had brought a man in from Salt Lake City, and he was affiliated some way with the Nevada-Utah Hotel Owners Association, and made quite a pitch in explaining that it wouldn't stand up constitutionally or it had some other defect in it. And what had given me the idea, we had just returned from a trip to Canada; and I noticed on my—each bill, hotel bill was

a five percent sales tax on the room back in 1955. And there was just no way they could put a tax on a hotel or motel room in Nevada. Well, possibly not under the sales tax. I still think it could have been included. They said it wasn't merchandise, and the sales and use tax was on commodities. "Wait a minute! What about the use?" I said, "It's not just a sales tax. It's a sales and *use* tax."

So, the rest of the story you know. We now have park and recreation commissions and park boards and convention authorities fightin' like hell, because they have so much money to spend, particularly Las Vegas and Reno. We do have tax on hotel and motel rooms, but unfortunately it was not funneled into the general fund.

I got a little ahead of myself when I related those items about the enactment of the tax itself. The thing that I believe I stressed and I wanted to stress in there, that I just don't believe the sales tax is all that bad, sales or transaction. And with the exception of Nevada and I think they did pull the boo-boo when in order to keep it two percent and not three, that they did slap it onto the food and drug. And I much would have preferred to see the higher rate, like maybe it would have been up to four by now. We don't know. But California and even neighboring towns—I'm thinkin' in terms now of Bishop to Tonopah—right to this day in '76, large Safeway in Bishop, we have a large one in Hawthorne. Tonopah is about the same distance from either place. Some from Tonopah do shop here. Quite a number shop in Bishop, and I've just asked many of 'em what it is. Well, it's just such a relief not to have to pay a tax on our food. We pay it on everything else and not to pay it on our food. So that sore spot has not gone away as much as some people might think.

I think, as I recall, Forest Bibb and Denver Dickerson and I got wrestling it around over

a couple of beers. And I'll be honest, I think Denver kind of secretly sided with me, but didn't want to put [chuckling] the Democratic party and all on the spot. And I don't recall whether Forest took the opposite side or not. I don't know whether Paley was around in those days, but there was some labor leader and I got into kind of an argument over it. He was takin' that stereotyped argument that, "Oh, no, this is tax on the poor people!"

I tried to get them to take a new look at the room tax idea in '57, but no one wanted to touch it then. They said, "No, it (the sales tax) was put in by the people; it can only be amended by the people." And this is something that's never been fully explored. It's one of these things—"let's not stir it up." And I recall one time something came up about the sales tax, and I was sittin' in Grant Sawyer's office when he was governor. I suggested something about amending the sales tax act and he said, "You can't do that. That was put in by the people."

I said, "Grant, the Nevada sales and use tax was not put in by a vote of the people."

He said, "Oh yes it was."

"Oh no it wasn't." I said, "Damn it, I'll show ya!" And I went behind his desk and got the statute books out, and showed him it was enacted by the 1955 session of the Nevada legislature.

He said, "My God, that's right." He said, "Well, now we keep comin' down with all these opinions, you know, that it could be changed only by a vote of the people." And I think this was the time when they were tryin' to get either the school special tax or something on; I don't recall what it was.

I said, "The question on the ballot was to repeal it. Repeal the sales tax, not to enact one, and the people voted *not to repeal*, to retain or sustain what had been done." But I says, "Now you're gettin' into that legal

jungle of, was the original law put in by the people, as separated from the legislature?" And I said, "It was not. Our basic sales tax was enacted by the Nevada state legislature." And that's when these various moves would come up to try to have the legislature, anyway, amend it like the food and drug. And this possibly is gonna give Mary Gojack something to go on. If I ever see the gal, I'd like to sit down and talk to her. I don't think she was even around, or in the state when it was enacted. Isn't that right? Ask her if she's done her homework or get two or three lawyers arguin' with each other. Just where do we stand on this? Was it, or can this be amended by the legislature?

TABLE TAX LEGISLATION

You've seen the development of gambling here and development of gaming regulations coming in at the state level. You've been involved in lobbying, especially for the distribution back to the counties of the table tax and so forth. I wondered if you would like to describe that activity from the point of view of someone who's been able to watch the development here of one of the best known resort complexes?

Yes, that was one of the most interesting sessions I ever attended. I recall I went up on Thursday, going to come home on a Friday, had no change of clothes or anything else. I'm speakin' now about that famous table tax wrangle, but I'll get to that phase of it later, 'cause we didn't finish until the following Monday morning wrangling that one. And it was a two-headed monster that table tax deal, and I've honestly tried to educate more members of the legislature particularly those from Clark County. And they show interest and whim' to listen on how the licensing and taxing of gambling in Nevada since it was

reinstated in 1931, has evolved, I guess you would call it.

The first step in '31 was to place a license on gambling, and it still remains in the book—did it in '31. It set the fee, the legislature did. The fees were—what we call the table games—I used to refer to them as the big three because we'd have "21," craps and roulette, but see they were charged at a hundred and fifty dollars a quarter. The poker, the pan games and the like, seventy-five. They're card games as against table games and slot machines, thirty dollars a quarter. The one hundred and fifty, seventy-five, and thirty dollar license fees to be divided one quarter to the state, one quarter to the county, and one-half to the incorporated city or unincorporated town where collected. Now that was the basic license and remains today as it was then. And I use the word *baste*.

Now the counties and cities saw a chance to pick up a little revenue not too long after. But ten dollars a month for a slot machine license was rather small or a minimal amount. The cities in some cases, and even the smaller counties, would add on their own—they didn't know whether to call it a tax or a license, but they had a fee, so came up with a *fee*. I recall in Reno they had great debates about their liquor license—if you called it a bar—if it wasn't a casino, they would go according to the size or the number. They were lookin' for revenue, but away from the liquor side—. Back to the gambling, you'll find in each of these towns where the basic license for the state might be ten dollars on the slot machines, they're payin' a lot more than that when they pay the local add-on. That was the first step, the license. Then came the tax on gambling, the first tax on gambling based on gross revenue which was put in immediately following the war, the theory bein' that unless the state had a direct interest (financial interest), it could not control it. And, frankly, up until

then the counties and cities pretty much controlled who received a gaming license. So that is the gross tax which is still with us today and went from the one percent on up, I know. [Chuckling] Interesting story in that, when they introduced the bill, Walter Cox [chuckling] wanted to put it in at ten percent. He says, "We'll eliminate half the gamblers in Nevada; just the minute they read it," he said, "they'll jump out the window." [Laughing] But they did compromise, and this was, I said right after the war. They talked about it even at the time that Carville was still governor, I know—kickin' it around to have a postwar fund—I know that came under him. So we have the gross revenue. Now the state seeking a little more revenue all the time, whatever way it could get it, had created a "table tax" back in the forties. And all of that money went to the state, the same as the tax on gross revenue. It wasn't too disturbing to the smaller counties because the original scale or table for table tax—I'm reading now, for example, an amendment in 1949—they changed it to allow a certain number of tables to operate in a small town, county or Reno or Vegas, wherever they might be. The smaller places with three or less tables were not included in this table tax. And of course in 1949 they even changed it from three to four; you could operate up to four, and that was seven hundred and fifty dollars. Then it jumped to seventeen fifty for five games. They used to say four or five, and this is five games, and so on up to twenty-one games or more, the sum of thirty thousand dollars. And then after that each table, a thousand dollars.

The real jolt on the table tax came with this amendment in 1955 when [consults book]—I always call it the "Bennyhoff" bill because Bob [Robert N.] Bennyhoff and I argued many times about it and he couldn't see why every table shouldn't be taxed. Didn't see where it

was going to hurt that much, and they came on with this new scale of table tax: one game (the establishments operating only one game), one hundred dollars; those establishments operating or to operate two games, two hundred dollars; those establishments operating or to operate three games, the sum of six hundred dollars. Now the small licensees were hit between the eyes with that three-game issue with this sudden new six-hundred additional on top of their license, on top of their gross revenue. The result was a direct loss in money to the counties, small cities and unincorporated towns which many members of the legislature had a hard time understanding.

And here is the way it came. If an establishment had been operating three games under the old law with no state table tax, it paid a license on all three, the state getting its share, also county and the city or unincorporated town. Immediately, and I know of two places right in this town cut back from three to two tables to stay in that two hundred-dollar bracket instead of six hundred. Well, the state lost nothing because they had this new two hundred comin' in as well as their quarter share of the other two tables, but the loss of the third table, reduced the revenue from it to the county and the local government entity. And when you multiplied that many times, the little cow counties got hit right between the eyes. That was the beginning of the move to do something about this infernal table tax.

At that same session, late in the session, I recall havin' quite a discussion with Bill [William D.] Swackhamer, then the assemblyman out of Lander, to see if we could put together some type of bill, law, enact it into law, having a special one-cent tax on gasoline, with that revenue to go into a central fund being administered by the state to reimburse the hospitals around the state for taking care of those indigent medical cases that they were

bringin' in off the highway. Winnemucca and Lovelock were getting hit hard. Washoe Medical was given a real jolt. Of course, they can always back bill the county where the accident occurred. That was a very unfair thing. It might be cross-country tourists. If it occurred in Pershing County, Pershing was responsible for the bill at Washoe. If it occurred in Humboldt, Humboldt was responsible. The hospitals have to be paid, can't expect Washoe or even Southern Nevada Memorial [Las Vegas] to carry this load. And yet these little counties receive not a dime from these people, tourists going to Reno or Vegas to gamble, and I said the one fair way is to make it a state function. And Bill said, "Well, it's pretty late in the session." He said, "You'll get a wrangle from the fuel dealers and the rest, but it's worth looking into."

By the time the next session came around, we had switched from our gasoline tax idea to start givin' every county in the state a "cushion," so they could pay Washoe Medical or pay Southern Nevada Memorial, or keep their own hospital open and all these mounting bills from medical indigents. And at the same time we wanted to help our friends in the gambling business, started out as just the little gamblers, such as Joe Viani, Pete Castellani, each of whom had dropped a table. We ended up helping some big ones too. We went charging after that table tax scale and the whole table tax law. And the pitch was made that an even division of the table tax would stop the state from grabbing all the money in sight. We were able to muster some strength out of Washoe and Clark counties by pointing out that, "Storey's gonna get the same amount as Washoe, but you're not getting a dime now," and used the same argument on Clark. Clark was screaming, some of them in particular, that "we raise it all in Clark and now you're gonna divide it up."

We said, "Just a moment, Clark and Washoe do not pay this tax; they collect it." I said, "They collect it, the same as the treasurer of Lyon County or White Pine, collect the tax from Anaconda and Kennecott [Copper Companies] and send it in to Carson; so on that basis, why, every county'll be fightin'. They say, 'Well, look where the tax originates.'"

And so we started out tryin' to reduce the basic table tax. Then we saw we would need some support possibly from some of the big boys too, to give us a hand. So at least John [F.] Giomi's name stayed on the bill [chuckling], Assembly Bill 162. The move then was to reduce from six hundred to four hundred dollars, and it did carry that way. We tried to get it back down to two hundred, compromised at four, to get the additional games in these smaller establishments, whether they be in a cow county or Reno or what, which restored some revenue in a small way from the license share. The way that we were able to get support from some of the larger fellas to talk to their representatives (and there were quite a few there) was to change the law where it says "those establishments operating, or to operate more than ten," et cetera, and changing to "those establishments operating or to operate more than *sixteen* games, the sum of one thousand for each game to and including sixteen, and the sum of two hundred for each game in excess of sixteen. Dropped it from a thousand to two hundred on all over sixteen games, a real help to the big places.

Some people said, "Well, why in the world are you givin' the big gambling joints a break by lowering the fee on all over sixteen games?" A break—sure, but they put in those Fourth of July weekend tables; they put in the Christmas and New Year's period tables. You give them some breathing room, they're gonna hire a few more dealers; they are going to pay the

license on them to the Washoe and Clark counties and the cities of Reno, Sparks and Vegas. They're gonna pick up a little added revenue, but this way, maybe we can talk to the labor boys too. With that provision on there and the realization that there would be some extra work, particularly in those holiday periods, and that's what they were shooting for, why Jimmy Ryan really lined up the labor side of that assembly with us and whipped a couple of Clark County boys into line to go with the "cows," as he called it, on that bill.

I've tried to give you a start on this thing, the background reasoning for it. I started out [chuckling], there again, with a little bitterness over what they'd done to the cow counties originally, and the state got greedy; now we're gonna divide it evenly. Well, the outlook wasn't too good on the assembly side. The senate seemed pretty favorable. Of course, there was a senator from every county in those days [chuckling], and very few could speak against it. As a matter of fact, let's see Brown, he was up there, B. Mahlon Brown; I forget who was the senator at the time from Washoe, but we weren't too much concerned. But they seemed very considerate of the cows on it. The assembly was split almost evenly.

Then this thing got kickin' around, why, naturally B. L. Cord took great interest in it, because Esmeralda had favored him with the appointment of state senator which meant a lot. He was not politically ambitious, but at the time he got that appointment, I know, he really wanted it to establish once and for all that he was a bonafide resident of Nevada. The state of California would never agree that the man was a Nevada resident. They were always hounding him for taxes, and his lawyers would wrangle and argue. Well, once he was seated in the Nevada State Senate, California from then on had a hell of a time claimin' he was not a Nevada resident. And he'd always felt so kind

that—he got very much interested in Giomi’s bill. See John Giomi was from Lyon County, and [Walter] Cox was from Lyon County; he got me started on it, workin’ this hallway or that hallway. And Cord says, “You might be overlookin’ a good point of argument.”

I said, “What is that, Senator?” He said, “California, in order to get on pari-mutuel betting, had to guarantee every county in the state, each one of the fifty-eight, a certain share of that gambling take to be used for the promotion of county fairs. And one of the arguments for horse racing at the county fairs, is to improve the breed, the constant development of a good strain of horses, and it was there for the little counties as well as the big ones to have in their annual fairs, the horse races, bring ’em back to Santa Anita, let ’em run.” And he said, “That was what gave it to them.” Now he said, “Let’s tell the big boys from Reno, Vegas, anywhere else, Nevada gambling is no better, no worse than California gambling, and if they think they can use the state, the state legislature, as a vehicle to aid only one or two spots in the state, that they might some day lose that gambling privilege they have.” And frankly we did. We pounded that pretty hard.

We said, “Look, if you think you’re gonna use the state and grab all the marbles and let the little cow counties go broke and starve, we’ll start the damndest movement you ever saw and not just within the state, outside the state, either to bring in the feds or close down gambling.” We said, “You know, we’re just a little bit tired of being the ugly duckling out in the sticks.” And that thing went back and forth.

Now, we pushed it through the assembly, and then the senate tacked on, I think, that two-hundred-dollar amendment. I forget which way it came, but it had to go to conference committee; and it worked right

down to the third conference committee before the assembly accepted the senate’s amendment. The first two deadlocked, and if three deadlock, why, your whole bill is dead. Well, this all began to take place late Friday afternoon. They went into session on Saturday, and they were into session on Sunday tryin’ to wrap up pretty well. And well, good heavens, on that Sunday afternoon, it was funny to say, I’m wearin’ the same outfit I wore when I went up there Thursday; I didn’t have a clean pair of shorts or anything ’cause I was just gonna come back the next day. [Chuckling] Walter was the same way, borrowin’ a razor to shave with. And Cox and I have often laughed; it was one day, when we called it, when we brought the royal family away from the palace and down onto the playing field. We had Norman Biltz, Bill Woodburn, of course Mueller was there all the time, Johnny. But they came over just to see what was happening. The pressure was on to kill that bill from sources we never believed, just the provincial groups in Reno, provincial in Vegas. “You just can’t do this; the money’s all raised in Clark and Washoe! Why should it be divided around the state?”

Tom Kean and I had quite a heated argument on it. I said, “What are you talkin’ about, Tom? Washoe’s not getting anything now; they’re gonna be fifty thousand dollars richer, and all the counties can use it. The state’s the greedy one in this act.” And poor Maude Frazier almost had a heart attack; she just couldn’t see it at all. And that upset us because Maude having started her career in the little old town of Goldfield and all; we pleaded with her and the help it would mean and all. But oh the—it was just a provincial line, but I recall poor [Clifford E.] Sanford, (little dealer over there who was at the Holiday then, been at the Mapes for many years), and he was one of the few Washoe

votes that we were able to pick up. And he came out and he just shook his head, you know, turned his arm around like it'd been twisted off him, and he said, "You want my blood too?" [Laughing] A lot of heat had been turned on Sanford.

Jim Bailey had come cryin' to me that Farrell Seevers had his pet bill bottled up in his desk. It had to do with the motor vehicle department where Jim wanted to work and all, and cryin' on my shoulder. I said, "Well, how are you voting on that table tax division?"

"Oh geez," he says, "I can't vote for that. No, I'm from Washoe; I can't vote for it."

"Well," I said, "I hope you have a lot of success gettin' your bill out of Seevers's desk." [Chuckling]

To just jump over that one, when he saw that it passed, and then it came up for reconsideration on Monday morning tryin' to kill it again; Maude Frazier'd brought it up for reconsideration. Bailey knew that we meant business then—it couldn't move. He switched, and he voted against reconsideration. He says, "I'm on record. I voted against it originally, but I'll help ya now on reconsideration. Will you help me get my bill out of Seevers's desk?" [Laughing] And we had two or three that way, but the surprising—let's see, Jim Ryan lined up three or four votes for us. We skimmed through by a two or three vote margin on the passage on Sunday, and that afternoon we thought we'd lost it again on reconsideration. Then we started turnin' a few others around like Bailey, and we caught one or two others that were willing, now, to let it stand as it passed. And I think in the final count we saved it by only about two votes.

But ironically—I'm just sorry I don't have that record (I've got it buried somewhere) on the actual tally. We lost a number of

votes from cow county representatives. I recall Winnemucca or Humboldt split one and one—one with us, one against us. Bruce Barnum from Lyon County, of course, he knew he was movin' to Sparks then, and gonna get in politics in the northern part of the state, and he voted against us. So we didn't have the solid vote in the "cows." And without some help from Clark and Washoe, the poor old bill to improve the breed and pay the hospital bills [chuckling] probably never would have seen the light of day. And that, generally, was the story of your famous AB 162, as we called it. We memorized the number.

I saw John Giomi about three weeks ago over in Yerington, a retirement party for a mutual friend. John had never forgotten. He said, "Well, by golly, I still thank you and Cox," he says, "you left my name on the bill anyhow." [Chuckling] It was so different, you know, than the original bill!

I might say, though, all the big places, all of those in Vegas, Vegas or Clark, whichever way you wish to put it, benefited far more than Reno, because they had that many more places with sixteen or more tables that benefited from the option of increasing the number of tables during holiday periods, puttin' 'em in for peak periods, and they pay only the two hundred. The greater benefit was down in the south.

And outside of two or three small gamblers (gamblers with small establishments who benefited from this), the only one of the big fellas that ever made it a point to say thank you for the way the bill worked out was [Raymond I.] Pappy Smith, the only one. And Cox ran a little poll himself afterward, told all of his local editors around the state; he suggested they all go to their city councils and boards of county commissioners, particularly, since this new revenue went to the county (later on

the law was amended to give the cities some of it too), and ask 'em if they knew that they were going to get some new revenue. He says, "I'm waitin' to see if they say thank-you." And most of the editors around the state did. The average county commissioner said he'd read or heard somethin' about it, but well, "the state should do that," was their attitude. He was a little bit perturbed with some of these county commissioners with not as much as a thank-you.

FEDERAL BOONDOGGLES

There really isn't too much to say about the planning commission. I served on one of the original ones, but it's the same as every other small community, where you get a federal grant one way or another, 702 or 207 or something, and you bring in an expert, someone from the outside carrying a briefcase. And they work up a master plan, then you apply for a grant to implement it, and then the grants are no longer available because either they're out of funds or you didn't do it right. And it's so typical of all the small towns, and then you go to the county commissioners, enact ordinances, and then from there on you create a variance board. And it becomes one big round robin or merry-go-round deal where every individual issue comes up. Actually, I don't refer to my brief days on the original planning commission; it really doesn't mean that much.

Oh, I did get, not in a hassle, but a little fun with Ray Smith out of Reno, who had been engineer there for many years and a good one. But he was on this *cul-de-sac* kick, and we had to ask him how to spell it and

what it meant, and he explained that you go around in a half circle and eliminate the alleys. And we said, "Well, we seem to be going around in circles most of the time, not half circles, and that eliminating the alleys is great. You go over and take a look at our Lakeview project—new, nice houses. And if there's anything uniform about 'em, it's that every house has a garbage can out in front of it." So we had to, more or less, question Ray on closing off some of our alleys and even some of our streets, that we didn't believe that land was all that costly that we gave up just a few hundred feet. In all that planning, the ones I always sympathized with when they eliminate alleys and make it in the modern "concept" (that's the word now that you use—you have to get into that concept-bit), watching the poor utility men tryin' to repair a broken waterline, goin' over each neighbor's fence, or under, and diggin' in a ditch under the fence, the powerline men gettin' in to try to service, change a transformer, and then the garbage men tryin' to get people to not park so far out on the street because the garbage truck is so

wide it has to worm through. And they have to walk around a car to pick up the garbage barrel, carry it to the center of the street and dump it. It's just one idea of progress, but one that I don't accept. If you can afford an alley, there's nothin' wrong with it at all. It's a good point to service waterlines, powerlines, and haul your garbage away.

And I think I mentioned that Tonopah, unintentionally, was a pioneer in this concept, I use advisedly, of having no alleys. Every thoroughfare in Tonopah was a street, and then that meant that when people sitting on their front porch (in the) cool of an evening, if you had a cool evening during those hot summer months, not intending to embarrass the poor devils who lived across the street, but when they came out of the house to go to the outdoor "john" in their backyard, they would have a pretty good audience timing them how long [chuckling] they were in, and when they got off! And that convinced me that when I moved to Hawthorne, these alleys looked pretty nice, because your front porch view was not always somebody else's john across the street. [Laughter]

And I'm sure I got in there that the one that always amused me, though, was St. Patrick's Street. I used to tease both Catholics and non-Catholics in Tonopah about that particular St. Patrick's Street in Tonopah. It started at kind of a wye point on the road to Goldfield, started at the Presbyterian church, ended up in the red light district and Masonic hall was midway in between. [Laughter] I used to get back at all of my non-fish-eating friends with that. I said, "Say what you want about us fish-eating 'micks,' Papists, but you've caused a very grievous scandal when you put all those places on St. Patrick's Street!"—Presbyterian church, the Masonic lodge and the red light district or "whore town" as we called it in those days.

The Bicentennial deal, I didn't last too long on that. I quit largely because of the, oh, the disclosure act—and some of those forms I would have had to fill out tellin' what few shares of stock I might own, how little I have in the bank and all, to serve on a voluntary commission, and I just said, "To hell with it!" If that's the way the legislature wants to set it up, they could go get somebody else sucker enough to do it. They might catch me now on this Commission on Judicial Discipline. I don't know and I don't give a damn. I'm not ashamed of what I have and what I *don't* have; if anything it's what I *don't* have that might be a little embarrassing to the family. I got that punchline in before—that's my only objection to the disclosure.

SCHURZ RESERVATION HOUSING AUTHORITY

The matter of doing something for the Indians was started back, at least in the matter of housing to my knowledge, was in the early 1960s, and we were very sympathetic to the people on the Schurz reservation in improving their living conditions. And through our own Mineral County Economic Development Committee, about 1965, we came up with the idea that since so many of the houses in the residential area of Naval Depot known as Babbitt were bein' disposed of, and I say disposed of because there are two ways of doing it. One is by "excess" first, and then "surplus." That's government talk and also government procedure. When government property is "excessed," such as the houses were (a number of them, about half of the houses), while in the excess classification, they are offered to any and all government agencies based upon a priority list, of course, to take the houses and move them away.

Many government agencies did. White Pine County School District, for example, took three, moved them from here to Ely. And only recently, I saw a notice that having served the purpose, those houses are bein' offered for sale now. They're disposing of them themselves. Our own Mineral County School District obtained many. Our Mineral County library in Hawthorne is still [1975] located in an exsessed Babbitt house.

Considering that the Schurz Indians in one way or another are classed as wards of the government, at least separate and apart with separate laws applying in the reservation, a federal reservation, we made a strong move to stop the Babbitt houses from going helter-skelter all over the land, and reserve some of them for the Schurz Indians because after other Nevada agencies, governmental agencies, had claimed their share as excess, a number of the houses were then declared surplus. And when they're surplussed, then they're put on the open market, on the block, for auction bidding, and a large number were purchased, some by individuals.

I see 'em many times, there's one out in Finger Rock Wash between Luning and Gabbs [chuckling] at a ranch, small; you might call it dry land ranch. I know of one in Goldfield; I've seen one in Lancaster, California. You'll see them in Beatty or near Beatty, and all over the state of Nevada. And these were purchased by individuals, and a large block were purchased by a speculator from Chicago and then resold. And that is what prompted us to come up with this brilliant thought, we believed we had, to just move some of them from Babbitt to Schurz, remodel them and make them into good housing for Schurz Indians.

But just about the time we thought we had that one tied down, the Vietnam War had accelerated to a point that every house left

in Babbitt was sorely needed for housing for ammunition workers, the same as in Korean War and World War II. But we didn't quit there. We decided to push for one of these "mutual help" programs that we had heard and read about, and this was the beginning of a beautiful experience in red tape. I'm sure it was '65, and I'll tell you about the formation of the housing authority.

We had Cannon on the fry, Baring on the fry, Bible on the fry—let's do something for the poor Indians on this mutual housing. We had a number of informal meetings, one or two in Hawthorne and then two or three in Schurz to learn how and why a housing authority would be necessary to put this project together.

I met more representatives of federal and state agencies during that experience that I believe I had before or have since. When we get down to the nitty-gritty of the thing, the various representatives from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the U.S. Health Service, and one or two departments under HUD (the Housing and Urban Development), met with us and outlined to the Indian Tribal Council and to those of us who were individually interested, all the requirements for formation of a housing authority. And not to drag this out, such was created. The five member housing authority was chosen by the Tribal Council.

The Indians, bein' pretty foxy, read into the regulations or read from the regulations or *in* them, not into them, that any member of the housing authority would be ineligible to qualify for one of the houses when we started building them. So, they asked a number of outsiders, and if you've had any experience at all with the Indians, particularly around a reservation, that anyone not a member of that tribes even another Indian, is an *outsider*. And they asked some outsiders

to volunteer to serve out of the group that had been meeting with us. We had everyone from the commanding officer of the Naval Ammunition Depot and other officers from there, down to Mineral County officials and other non-Indian citizens, such as myself. And, as I recall, our very first housing authority membership consisted of one county commissioner, Earl Lebeau was on the board of commissioners and myself; from Schurz, Dr. Herman Hereford, who was the principal and one of the teachers at the Schurz Elementary School, in fact, the first and for a long time the only PhD in the Mineral County School System, but he chose to remain [chuckling] as the principal of the grade school with Schurz.

Later—I'm digressing now—but later Dr. Hereford moved to Fallon, and he retired and ran a gas station, and ran for lieutenant governor at one time; you'll find it on the record. The fourth one was Leonard Autajay; I think it was A-U-T-A-JA-Y or something. He was the Methodist minister at Schurz, non-Indian. And I believe our fifth one was the only Indian; I don't recall whether it was Bridget Harry, who was living in Schurz at the time, or whether they asked her son, who was a carpenter working in Reno at the time, to serve on it. But I believe it was Bridget herself. I'm not certain; I'd have to check the record on that. But that was our first housing authority.

And from the very beginning of holding these many, many meetings in Schurz and with representatives of the BIA from Phoenix, from Stewart, from HUD in San Francisco, U.S. Health Service, even some of the state officials including the Employment Security department (we used to call it the unemployment department). I don't think we had NIC in it, but if anyone was overlooked, it wasn't intentional because every agency was supposed to have a representative. We

had a meeting in Schurz one night, and other than the interested Indians who were there (all of us supposedly having a voice in developing this housing project), there were thirteen or seventeen representatives from one agency or another. I was the only one who was not on a public payroll, some branch of government or another. I looked around the room [chuckling], and I said, "My God, if we could just take what it's costing to send all these governmental employees in mileage, per diem, probably some overtime because we meet at night, we could build a few houses!"

But we moved along, and when we got down to signing all the initial set of papers, we were the housing authority, but we sat outside the bar, so to speak, because now the Tribal Council was in session. The question put to ourselves as the authority, and to all these federal experts who had to provide the answers was: "Does this non-discrimination clause mean that we have to allow anyone to have a chance at one of these houses?"

I believe one federal man said, "Well, yes, well not just anyone," I think he said, "but any Indian." And the next question was, even though he's not a member of the Paiute tribe at Schurz, or *our* tribe, as they meant, even though not a member of *our* tribe? And they said yes, that they could not discriminate against Indians of another tribe.

Well, their recess was called, and the Tribal Council went in a little back room into what now would be known as "executive session" or "personal session." [Chuckling] None of us were asked to go in that back room while they discussed it. When they returned, they said, "Well, we've agreed to sign this paper with the non-discrimination clause, but with some reservations and we may have more to say about that later." So they signed it, and we thought we had the show on the road. And then not to bore you with the

whole thing, I never saw such a botched up, balled-up program in my life as that mutual help housing program.

The theory was that by Uncle Sam providing the material and some supervision, the Indians would contribute their labor and the labor would be credited towards their equity in the house, the house that each Indian would receive; and everybody, as the mutual help implies, was to help one another. In the meantime, they're supposed to be learning a trade or become more proficient with their hands. This was the word that came from Washington, the experts at the higher levels. In other words, by helping to build parts of twenty houses, the Indians were supposed to suddenly become carpenters, electricians, cement mixers, skilled in roofing and flooring, and anything connected with building a house.

Yet another part of the requirement was to give priority to the elderly Indians, and particularly widows; and we did have a number of the elderly Indians, particularly the women, widowed or not, work on those houses. With one or two exceptions, they were the best workers we had. The women workers, superior to the men. Those women actually out there nailin' up boards and anything to gain one of those houses. I don't know if they learned a trade or ever went out to apply it later in life [chuckling], those over sixty! But this is some more of the government gobbledygook when they called it mutual help.

But the mutual help developed into mutual distrust—envy, jealousy, rivalry, because there were more than sixty applicants for the initial set of twenty houses. Those who were put on the waiting list for the second increment, if it ever came, with a few exceptions, wouldn't turn a finger to help those who were going to get the houses. Among those working on the

twenty houses, some for their own personal reasons and outward expressions of dislike, would work on certain houses, but not on others because they didn't like the person who was gonna live in that house. And we went through the rigors of hell tryin' to pacify those Indians, get 'em to help one another.

Those twenty houses, I don't know the total cost. There would be no way of finding how you would bill in all of the different federal department workers who would have to come in and check and inspect and travel back and forth. But I do know that it ran, as I recall, about three-hundred thousand dollars on the initial allocation, allotment, without the hidden expense, and which would put the houses, at what, fifteen thousand? At that time, I'm sure you could have contracted all twenty houses to a private contractor, got them built in reasonable time for somewhere in the neighborhood of twelve thousand, but that would have destroyed the mutual help concept that they were talking about. So instead we struggled for three and one-half years to get those twenty houses erected. Three and one-half years are what we spent tryin' to get the Indians moved in.

And though we were audited time and again, and came out clear, the one thing that the auditors might have looked at was how we finally finished the project. We were so disgusted at the tag end of it that we took it upon ourselves and hired (made certain we hired Indians), as I recall, I think one plumber and two electricians, who were from the Schurz area, but workin' elsewhere outside of the reservation, to come in and get the damn things finished and let the Indians move in. We said, "We'll worry about the air conditioning later," and it did come.

It was a pilot project. One finished ahead of us, little one, the small one over at the Washoe reservation around Dresslerville in

the Douglas County area. And I think there were fewer houses; I don't know whether they had twelve or fifteen, but they did a good job and got theirs finished. We just stumbled and dragged along and screamed and hollered to every federal representative that we could find, "Let's forget all this bunk about mutual help, if we're gonna get some free housing for the Indians"—and it's virtually free. The number of hours they worked had to be logged and that was credited to so many dollars per hour toward the equity in the house.

But, to shorten this up a little more, after our sad experience, the government did go to contract. They subsidized and created some Indian contracting companies and gave them the contracts to come in and put in the additional houses at Schurz. Ours was a very, very sad experience, and I recall the day that the houses were finally accepted. We had more inspectors, and chauffeurs from all over the West coming in on the day they had the so-called dedication. made myself very unpopular with some of the federal agents because in my brief talk I said that this was a living experience for me in a futile exercise of communism. Well, I popped off a little bit that way. I know one man from San Francisco said he didn't appreciate my remarks at all, and I told him I didn't appreciate the way that the bureaucrats were handling this thing for the Indians, and we had a little tangle over that. I might conclude it by saying that I have a copy of my letter of resignation in 1969 [chuckling] from the housing authority:

Having served on the Walker River Reservation Housing authority since its inception more than four years ago, it is with much personal satisfaction that I have witnessed completion of the first twenty housing units under the mutual self-help program. As all

concerned know, there were difficult periods between the start and finish of this project, but there is great satisfaction in knowing that the job was finally accomplished. Having experienced the good moments and the bad ones during this extended project, it is my honest belief that much of the difficulty at Schurz and elsewhere could have been averted had there been a single housing authority for various reservations and colonies, with a representative from each area serving on the central council. Because of this belief and the further belief that more representation from the Indians directly concerned is desirable, I respectfully tender my resignation from the Walker River Reservation Housing Authority effective August first, 1969.

And Earl Lebeau, the commissioner, submitted a similar letter the same day. We said, "We've seen it through this far; we want no more."

The one ironic part of it was in '70 when this Earl Lebeau (he still lives here) ran and was reelected county commissioner. After spending all those hours, those night trips we made to Schurz and with the Indians and listening to their gripes and complaints, that all it got him in the next election, he came in third at Schurz in the three-man race. He and I often have laughed about that. He said, "Well, one thing, if you're lookin' for votes, don't volunteer to help."

At one stage of the game, when they thought that it was takin' too long to get the checks from Stewart to Hawthorne and be signed and returned and someone wanted their money in a hurry, they requested Mr. Lebeau and myself to sign six blank checks so

that in case an emergency arose, they could fill them in and pay 'em right then. [Chuckling] We didn't have to deliberate or cogitate or anything else too long, to tell 'em no, we were not signing any blank checks. The one other thing that I have buried and for the sole reason that no one has ever asked for it, there were two or three sets of the plans for the houses, each house, and the large blueprints and the like. Because one morning I received a call from the Hawthorne Club, from the owner, and he said, "Are you still connected with that famous housing project at Schurz?"

And I said, "Oh, yes, I'm still stuck on that, why?"

He said, "Well, when the swamper was cleaning out the men's john this morning, he found a bunch of plans in there." So I walked right over and looked at 'em, picked them up, and wondered about this. I called Lebeau; and I said, "I don't know what's going on, what are the plans for our housing project doing in the men's room of the bar in Hawthorne?"

He said, "I don't know!" Well, we did a little snooping around, in fact, received one call before I did too much inquiring on my own from another friend in town. He said, "Hey, you'd better check on your housing job!"

I said, "Why is that?"

He said, "Well one of the pickups from the job was in town last night;" and he said "this guy is tryin' to sell hammers and steel tapes." He had a lot of steel tapes he'd sell for a dollar each. So we did a little nosing around, and sure enough, an expensive Skil saw—I say expensive, I believe it cost about two hundred and fifty dollars—that had been hocked down at Joe's Tavern. Young Joe Viani [laughing] gave the Indian boy a loan on it, and told him, "I'll put it in a box, put it in the office and you come back and get it, 'cause it's worth a lot more than that." Well before the Indian boy ever came back to get it, this incident

apparently had been reported from Schurz to Reno cause only a couple of days later one of the FBI boys was in to talk to young Joe, and the old dad was there. He'd already called the sheriff and says, "You get hold of the FBI or somebody. I don't this stuff around my place. I'll just have to write off whatever the boy gave him, as a loan on it." Well, that old Joe [Viani] just about took down the wall of that brick building [chuckling] readin' his own son off. He says, "You never lend anybody anything. You don't give 'em any help at all unless you know if they own the property." He was really screamin' at him. Well, they had to give up the Skil saw and it went back on the job.

But it was a very interesting experience. I learned a lot, not only that I made a poor housing authority member, and I'd already known that, but I proved it again, that I'm not a diplomat. Though I have lived around Indians all my life—Tonopah area, the Shoshones, and then the Paiutes, here, since I've been here since 1929—it gave me more insight to the rivalries, the jealousies, sometimes vicious with tongue, other times vicious with fists, and many times within families. They can be awful cold, awfully indifferent, and I've told them about it, many of them; and many of them know exactly what I'm talkin' about and can't dispute it that when one part of a family gets down on the other part of the family, as I've said to them, and every reasonable Indian I've talked to agrees with me [that] *no one* can be meaner to an Indian than another Indian. And that has really expanded and I'll say become worse since the federal government came up with all the cash entitlements.

It would make a very interesting study if people would just stop, you know, and get away from the sob sister stuff or listening to one side of it or watching one TV show, and get down and find out each family and what their grievance is, why they're tellin'

you just so much of a story. And what is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Because I make it a point when I talk to Indians around here; why, it's just the way we talk. I tell 'em about some of the bums in their tribe and some of the good people, as I see them, as I judge them; and I said, "I'm just as good a judge as any of you Indians are, even though you might know them a little better."

Through the years, we had worked on other projects; we had campaigned for better schools for them, and we were always proud of one thing, that Mineral County was the first county in the state, if not in the nation, to eliminate its only Indian school and merge the separate Indian school with the public school at Schurz. See, up until about 1947, believe, it was right after World War II, that they were able to get together with the—well, I don't know whether it was Bureau of Indian Affairs then; they used to be called the Indian Service, but they would always run their own schools. And it was silly because of the small school enrollment. They have the so-called white school or non-Indian school and the Indian school, and this county was the one that brought them together. And since then we've provided them with some good, modern classrooms. Some of the people appreciate it very much; others said, "Well, it was long overdue, and they're entitled to more."

And, the real difficulty you might say in later years, and no real difficulty as yet, and far preceding the "smoke shop," came from the great drive and charge of the politicians, both parties, at the federal level and state and then down to the local, to stress the minority status of the Indian, as well as Blacks, and then later the Spanish or Spanish surname citizens. And even to the point when everything was geared and all in one direction, restricted that the Blacks were the only minority, we spoke up and insisted that a little attention should

be given to the Indians and the conditions under which they lived.

This housing project was a good example and that was right about the peak of the '60s, when all the demonstrations were on college campus and downtown and in front of any defense installation, and everybody raisin' hell, put it that way. We did want to do something for the Indians. And the government has responded in many ways, and the opportunities for the Indians have opened up tremendously in the past fifteen years, not only in the area of advanced education in which the scholarships are very liberal, but in establishing a business and other ways. Any strained feeling that's developed, as I see it, has come from these uninformed courts who make either off-handed or misguided remarks in their decisions in favor of the Indians, implying that non-Indians, particularly whites, have abused or mistreated the Indians for a hundred or more years.

As I consistently point out in talking to Indians, that none of my people were here a hundred years ago. In fact, my father, first-born in this country, and even my mother came out of Northern Ireland, that they were havin' all the problems tryin' to hold on to their land battling with the English, and they didn't have time to fight any Indians—in fact they didn't have any Indians over there in Northern Ireland to fight. So, I says, "Count me out when you're talkin' about who mistreated you in years gone by," and I said, "and try to pinpoint in any way the *I*, since I've been here, have in any way not gone to bat for the Indians—in any way mistreated you." And I stand up and argue with them on that basis.

I have noticed lately though, in more recent years, that this militancy, this feeling of strain or dissension between Indians and whites, for the most part is bein' pushed from the college educated Indians. Now

whether that is a form of liberation, I don't know; but when we discuss, as I did recently, with Jonathan Hicks, who's now the tribal chairman, and I knew his granddad, knew his dad, wanted to see his granddad elected county commissioner in Mineral County, and I always did question the canvass of the vote on that, when he started out leading it and came in second in a Democratic primary. Jonathan was telling me very recently that they're preparing now to file a massive lawsuit claiming the water on the Walker River all through Lyon, Smith Valley, all along the river. And we were talking this over at the golf course, and with a smile on his face, he says, "When we get that one ready to go and out of our way, then we want your courthouse."

I says, "What do you mean, you want the courthouse?"

He says, "Well, we've done a little survey and that's still part of our territory. Hawthorne is, and we'll be ready to go."

I said, "Does that include my newspaper office?"

He said, "Yes, but we might make you a good deal on [chuckling] sellin' the land back to you." And he kidded a little bit about it, and yet they're half serious. We have watched the reservation boundary sign moved steadily southward as the Lake recedes; Walker Lake I'm speakin' of.

Ed Johnson and I discussed that same issue in which Ed claims that all of Hawthorne was part of the original reservation, but acknowledges that the southern half of Walker Lake in this general area here, was sold, and I think the figure was six hundred dollars, like Manhattan Island for the twenty-five dollars worth of beads or whatever it was appraised at. They might someday question the sale of their part of Walker Lake, and when this gets down to the wire, our courts, right up to the U.S. Supreme Court, one is going to have to

make a decision as Walker take recedes and continues to dry up, because I contend that under the act of Congress passed in the early 1800s, long before Nevada became a state, which gives to all states then in the union, and those which would come in the union, equal footing, equal entrance, equal right—that the state would have title to all land lying beneath any navigable body of water—lake, stream, river.

Ed Johnson disputes me on my contention that all this land that shows up now as Walker Lake recedes—disputes my argument that it belongs to the state of Nevada, not to Mineral County or the U.S. government, contending that the reservation boundaries were established in 1859, and Nevada did not become a state until 1864. Of course, the counter argument there is, no matter when the reservation boundary was established that prior to that 1859, the Congress intended as it said that all land lying beneath any body of water was the property of the state.

I've been after Bob [Robert] List for some time, and he claims he has one deputy working on it. I told him I thought he went ass-backwards on it worryin' about Pyramid. This should have been his test case down here at Walker, because as recently as June of 1976, the United States Supreme Court held for a second time that all the land showing around the Great Salt Lake and its original boundary, shoreline is the property of the state of Utah. And there are cases dating back, oh, one I believe in 1925, U.S. Bank that spelled it out pretty well; so in each instance that this issue has been raised, the states have been the successful litigants. And as I pointed out to Johnson, you might have had water, certainly, you might have had all the water in Walker Lake at one time, but that was the *lake*. The lake and the land beneath it are two different things, especially as nature removes the water

from it. So, this is gonna be an interesting case that'll have to get into court someday and determine just who owns that land, because some day long after I'm gone and possibly after you're gone there's gonna be quite a little valley in there where the lake dries up.

There will always be a small lake, I believe, similar to Washoe right near the cliff area, because there's a certain amount of water coming off Mt. Grant that is not captured, that goes underground, and there's only one logical place for the water to go and that is into Walker Lake and, as I say, at the deepest point. And the other areas, there are little springs that show up at the south end of the lake. You can feel little currents if you are swimming in the lake which I haven't done for some time, but we'd move around that cold water until we got into one of those currents where there's a little warm water coming in through there. And that will be a valley someday; and then I think with the underground wells, there will be a development.

Now, whether—the Navy, I was gonna say, or it would be the Army now, or someone else—claims the extreme southern tip, and the state of Nevada has in between there, and what the Indians will claim if it is so divided, it would be interesting to see the farming development, the agricultural development. If the state of Nevada owns the entire thing, then the state will have a very fine area of land that could be developed into a fertile valley.

And my conviction—I know nothing about water, engineering, hydrology, anything else, but the number of trees that you see at the south end of Walker Lake today, none of them were there when I came to Hawthorne in 1929. Oh, there might have been an old cottonwood or some scrub brush; but as the brackish water of the Lake has receded, and they're fed underground by fresh water from the mountains, I don't know, but all of those

trees have come in, in the last, well, roughly fifty years. So, I leave it to some scientists to go back, or to go out and check on the back history and the current history, and tell me if there's any basis for my belief on them. As an aside, when we wrangle not only with the Indians on the lake and the property, I've been razzin' the Navy, because where the new "demil" site is, was under water at the time, even when they created the Ammunition Depot, belongs to the state, why, we've got maybe a pretty good lever for tradin' Uncle Sam for some of the land they're tryin' to sell back to us now. [Laughing] So a little trade now that they got the plant built on it. And that law that I spoke of that each state would hold title to the land beneath the body of water, and that was the boundaries of the body of water as of the day that the state was admitted to the union which was 1864; and that lake was pretty high in 1864.

I've talked this over many times with a nice little lady from Minden, Grace Dangberg, 'cause I wrote an article one time and I got a quick response on it. They might have to intervene in any such action, because as the river might change course and recede in any way, what effect—is there a strip then, a "Gaza Strip," you know, of land between the river and their own property? And she and I have had some very good discussions on that. It's no simple question. But in 1972, in what I call the Brunswick-Bunkowski case, that our state supreme court (they cited many of these same authorities I did) stopped Brunswick Mining Company from mining on the bottom of the Carson River near Dayton, on the contention that it was not open for location because it's the property of the state of Nevada. And that's the same law again. In order to establish the Carson River to be navigable, they went deaf back into the history when they had logging operations—it was the *logging* operations.

Now, it has to be a navigable river, stream or lake; when I said any body of water; I should have said *navigable*; that's the key word in there. And, of course, Walker Lake had steamships on it, so it'd be pretty hard to prove or contend it's not navigable. And this is one that if we could do it in a spirit of just reasonable, calm adjudication, instead of bitter litigation, such as you have going on in Washoe and the other counties over the Pyramid Lake issue. That bitterness solves nothing and clouds the issue of the courts and everyone else.

BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION

I can't recall havin' a motive for serving on the Bicentennial Commission. It was another one of these deals as so often happens when you get suckered into something. They have to immediately from a committee or a commission, and it's not that you have any particular qualification, particularly in something of this nature, but I think they always take a swing around the state, visually that is. Now we have to have so many women, and they have to have a minority or two, and they get running through all these lists, and they overlook the one minority that's never officially listed and that's, I guess, the Republican party, or lonesome Republicans like myself. [Chuckling] I think many times that's the only reason; so they can beg off or back off any criticism that they were one-sided. In fact, I don't remember who appointed me, to tell you the truth. I think Vicki [Nash] called me on that Centennial Commission, and I said I'd give it a whirl, hoping to help out possibly, as always, some of the smaller communities, little cow county areas to get in on some of the loot.

I'd found out that this famous American Revolution Bicentennial celebration was

gonna be another one of the government boondoggles in which a lot of government money was bein' spent, and if you opposed it, why, you were unpatriotic. I wasn't afraid to say that I thought a lot of it was bunk, but I sat in on, oh, I think four or five meetings. I went to Carson—don't know if we had one in Reno or not I believe all of them were in Carson. And we would hear more silly, asinine presentations for someone lookin' for money. There was nothin' patriotic about a lot of these projects people developed. They just wanted to get in on the act, and get their hands in the pot. And I advised my own county Bicentennial Commission to get off their duff and make a pitch for some money, and, well, at the time they were rather independent. I don't believe we ever did come up with a project in Mineral County at the time I was on there.

Sometime later, I believe, they gave the Veterans of Foreign War post here four hundred dollars, I think, two hundred and then I believe a second, I'm not sure; there's a mix-up on the amount—to paint their building, the hall. It's a disgrace: It's about four blocks—the same street I live on, and I'm razzin' them all the time. They haven't got around to painting it yet; I don't know whether they still have the money in the cash register or the bank account, but it's disgusting to drive by that place and look at it. That's a good example of it.

I did try to help our local museum committee, but we couldn't—something that was historical and maybe permanent after 1976—that didn't seem to qualify at any time. You had to have these silly, one-shot deals, like a donkey race or makin' some girl "Queen of the May," donating some bleachers at the football field in Yerington that I razed 'em about and deliberately voted against. But we did have—I believe Fourth of July. As I recall, there were supposed to have been about three

thousand dollars in fireworks blown up in the space of an hour, and I think the Bicentennial Commission did put up about fifteen hundred for that. That one, I think, was Mineral County's major sharing in the thing. But it was just so—well, to me it always—gripping and harping about the boondoggles and spending government money. I just couldn't see this thing at all, and what really topped it off was when they put in the Ethics Law of 1975, in which anyone serving on a state commission, or the like, would have to make out this long ridiculous report on finances that I didn't understand. And it gave me a good excuse right then and there that I was resigning in protest of the Ethics Law, not the Bicentennial Commission. But as I recall, however, I wrote the letter and I said that was my major reason. Because Swack [William D. Swackhamer] was still on at the time. I told him, I said, "Well, I'm gonna resign before I'll fill out that damn required report."

He said, "Go ahead, send your letter in.!"

And I says, "Oh, you're not even gonna twist my arm and persuade me to stay on?"

And he says, "Hell no, I'm movin' in right behind you. Get yours in first."

So, that was the story sent in, not being critical of any of the other members who were there at the time, or after, or the staff working, but it was just another super-boondoggle. I put the American Revolution Bicentennial program, whatever you care to call it, in about the same class as the "swine flu" program, and now the one that's going on, this National Women's Conference, whatever it is in every state, and then down in Houston when Bella Abzug will come charging in with a new hat. I actually do, I compare the three of them. Surely the swine flu was based upon a crash program, some fear or concern, and the National Women's Conference and some on that. I think that's one of the meanest things

that the men of the United States have ever done to the women, by approving five million dollars to allow them to get out in the open and pull each other's hair, call each other all the vile names, and divide the women of the United States more so than they've ever been. It's too bad that they put that one together. I'm not against women havin' the right to this and that, but this is such a crash program and window dressing performance, that it's not gonna help the women.

So, I'll shut up on that and get onto this Humanities Committee. The way I got sucked into this thing, Bob Whittemore—up there they call him Doctor Whittemore, but we knew him as Bob when he taught high school in Hawthorne, and I think he went to Yerington, when Bob Best [Robert C.] took the superintendency over there. Then he went off to school for a while or during the summers and worked into the masters degree, and then got some kind of a job at the University. I don't know whether it was between masters and doctorate, but anyhow he ends up now, he finally reached a point where he could quit work and just take one of those positions as a doctor at the University. And I've told him this to his face. So help me, when they get that high, I don't know, that seems to be retirement on the job, I call it, retirement on the job.

[Chuckling] Bob went in for this head shrinking. He was a doggone good schoolteacher, I'll say that for him, aggressive and interested, and the kids liked him and all. But when he swung over to this head shrinking side, and that's all he's done, not psychiatry, I think his is psychology or some other deal. And he just, more or less, insisted that I would serve on this Humanities Committee. And I said, "What do you want me on that committee for? I know it's our money—it's another grant from Uncle Sam—

that National Foundation.” I think originally it was for the Arts and Humanities and then the National Foundation [Endowment] for the Humanities. And it is one of the biggest legalized rip-offs I have ever seen. The Congress votes this money, they funnel it out to these committees, and usually a university campus, and they sit there and decide how this money’s gonna be doled out. But I told Bob that I would, as a favor to him, I would try it for a while, and I said, “because I’m opposed to most of the things you’re doing in this program, as I understand it.”

He said, “That’s why we want you on the committee, so they cannot say it is stacked. We’d like to have an opposition voice.” There again they were using me, this time not as a Republican, but as an “anti.” They wanted it, so I went to a meeting or two.

Let’s see, Dean Hyde was our chairman I believe. Whittemore showed up, another professor or two, and there was Spike Wilson, Tom Wilson that we call Spike, the senator, another Tom Wilson—we ended up with two Tom Wilsons on the committee. The other was a little newspaper reporter who had worked in Carson, and did public relations work, and he was out of Vegas at the time.

Then just like the Bicentennial deal, everybody comes up with a project. They’re askin’ for money now. And I had suggested when they were lookin’ for a cause or justification for havin’ such a committee in Nevada, and what they could do with this money coming in that if they couldn’t figure out anything else in spite of all the men of letters we had sittin’ there and all that concentration of intellect, I suggested they try to kick together a program of the law and its direct relation to the public or something like that. I gave them a title, and I said, “If you could set up some programs and explain to people just the same as these

little newspaper columns do on what your liability is if you invite someone into your yard, and they get burned by these, what do they call those Hawaiian flames [tiki torches]? And when a person dies intestate, as they call it, meaning without will, why it has to be probated in order to maintain a chain of title, and I thought I was really makin’ some points with Spike Wilson who is a lawyer and Dean Hyde, an attorney, and then even before I got off, Judge Lew Young came into the picture.

I believe that we were under the impression that we were going to get programs going, even in the little communities, so that the average person might save money by not having to wait until someone in the family died, and see all the probate costs, and how expenses could be avoided on the estate side, and about transactions, contractual agreements, just the few basic rules of law that affect every citizen. I thought we were gonna have a good deal set up. Hell, by the time they got around to it, they bought some motion pictures that you could take around and show, oh, sixteen millimeter or something, and then they brought in two or three speakers, and it became more or less of an in-house deal where they’d all run across the street from the University to the Center for Religion and Life, or some other damned thing. They would have these mutual admiration meetings and it seemed the same speaker, same crowd. And that began to gall me a little.

Then I saw some projects that were turned down that I thought justified two or three thousand. Then some approved for one-day seminars in Las Vegas on the subject why do people of low income not have steak as often as persons in the upper income bracket; or why [chuckling] a person without funds doesn’t dress as well as the owner of one of the casinos? They’ve had, believe me (just check the record), some of the damndest

one-shot deals and all costing twenty-nine hundred, thirty-four hundred. I still get the list of how they've doled out the money. And this began to bug me no end, and I finally got hold of Whittemore and I said, "What are we supposed to be doin'? Just dishin' out money? I drive all the way from Hawthorne to Reno, and you're payin' me mileage and reimbursin' me for that three dollar lunch that we had to pay the University for; and it goes all through the computer and the bookkeeping, and then you reimburse me the three."

"Well, that's part of the expenses and all." And the only enjoyable session—oh, at first it wasn't so bad because there's nothin' I enjoy more than gettin' three or four PhDs in the same room and especially in different fields which we had. We had Dr. Hyde, the lawyer, and Bob Whittemore, the head shrinker, we had Doctor somebody else that taught philosophy at some university, and by this time, Judge Young, Judge Lew Young, and Spike Wilson, and I don't know whether little Torn Wilson was there that day. And we'd been wrangling over what is an "academic humanist." I recall Whittemore gave his version and Dean Hyde didn't agree with that; and then the other PhDs tried to come on with a melding of their two views, and we couldn't come up with an answer.

So, we had a nice little girl come out from Washington, D.C. See, expense is no problem because this is in the name of the humanities, you know; you don't worry about expense. [Chuckling] And this nice little gal—she was a sweet little gal and a good sense of humor; she had a masters degree, and working' toward her doctorate. And her doctorate would be in the humanities which would make her a full-fledged academic humanist in time, but you went around the table, not one of them according to the rule book, the guideline, we

didn't have a bonafide academic humanist on our whole team.

So, I said, "Well hell, I know I'm not one because I said I'd never been rated as human and I certainly don't have any degrees of any kind, so that wipes out my academic status." So I said, "How about the rest of you fellas?" We got to comparin' notes, and Spike Wilson, I believe, has a doctorate of jurisprudence, but Judge Young didn't. Judge Young had a bachelor of laws, because at the time Judge Young graduated from law school that's what they granted, was a bachelor of laws. In later years, when everybody was runnin' around with Dr. tacked on to his name, the law schools changed that overnight. The same course, the amount of time spent in school, they're no longer bachelor of laws, but they are doctors of jurisprudence; and they got to laughin' about it. They said the only difference is years, when you finish and when I finish, there's an automatic transfer. But in spite of all their titles and their degrees, no one in the room could qualify as an academic humanist, and we laughed about it.

I said to Whittemore afterwards, I said, "Hell, why don't you just take this money down to the welfare department and tell 'em that within the limitations of certain things, they can dole it out, and just hand it over to state welfare."

"Well, what do you mean?" he said.

I said, "Well, that's where most of it's going, to various welfare groups." Groups that wanted to put on an explanation of how unwed fathers could adjust, you know, and was it mid-summer or late in the winter? And it's still going on; that's the sad part! It is one of the most useless committees I know of in the state of Nevada. If they can show me where they've accomplished *anything* in ratio to the amount of money spent.

AFTERTHOUGHTS ON THE AMMUNITION DEPOT, 1982

It was only a matter of months before everyone, at least in the Hawthorne area, realized it [the Army operation] wasn't going to work. Apparently, this was realized in the Department of Defense, because even before the Army had encountered innumerable problems, with inventory and other phases of the operation, another study was ordered by DOD. This was a study to determine whether it would be more "cost effective" to have the plant operated by a private contractor. The study lasted more than a year and a half and to no one's surprise, the Defense Department decided to "contract out" which is the military parlance for transition from GOGO (government owned, government operated) to GOCO (government owned, contractor operated). On December 1, 1980, the plant was taken over by a joint venture of Day and Zimmermann of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Frank E. Basil of Washington, D.C. Day and Zimmermann had long experience in the operation of Army ammunition plants at Parsons, Kansas, and Texarkana, Arkansas. Basil has extensive interests in management.

Following the transition at Hawthorne, the Department of Defense undertook a study to determine the feasibility of transferring the Army ammunition plant at McAlister, Oklahoma (also a former Naval ammunition depot) to private contractors. Similar to what had occurred at Hawthorne prior to the transfer—bitter opposition by long-time government employees—the civil service employees at McAlister strongly opposed the "contracting out" of that plant and received effective support from U.S. Senator David L. Boren and Congressman Wesley W. Watkins, both of Oklahoma.

The senator and congressman sent staff members directly to Hawthorne to examine and report on the contracting operation of the Hawthorne plant. The report was highly critical and received widespread publicity in Oklahoma and in Washington, resulting in a postponement of the planned transition at McAlister.

Many employees of the contractor at Hawthorne and government workers still retained as part of the Hawthorne operation strongly protested the action of the Oklahoma senator and congressman, using Hawthorne as a whipping boy to strengthen the arguments against transition at McAlister. Many believe this criticism has had an adverse effect on the workload assigned to the Hawthorne plant. As a Naval ammunition depot during World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, Hawthorne was the largest producer and supplier of ammunition for the Pacific fleet. Today, as an Army plant, it has become virtually a receiving, stowage, and shipping depot, similar to the Army depot at Herlong. Whether it will ever regain its place of importance in the Defense program, depends in a large measure upon the effectiveness of Nevada's congressional delegation.

Many residents of the area believe that Senators Laxalt and Cannon and Congressman Santini were upstaged by a freshman Senator from Oklahoma, who went to bat for the McAlister plant, the same as former Speaker Carl Albert did for many years. Whether this is fair criticism of the Nevada delegation, the fact is evident that Laxalt, Cannon, and Santini have not been as effective in protecting the interests of Hawthorne as were Pat McCarran, Alan Bible, and Walter Baring.

MARRIAGE TO PAULINE MCCLOSKEY: FAMILY LIFE

WEDDING TRIP

1939 was a very eventful year. In fact, I figured that by now I could afford to get married. My wife, who was Pauline Thompson from Hawthorne, taught school and helped support her family; I was supporting my mother at the time.

Together we saved enough money to take a trip, first trip east for either of us. We started off being married in Reno at St. Thomas Aquinas Cathedral. The little deaconess from the Episcopal Church who had moved from Hawthorne to Reno, volunteered to play the organ that day for us [chuckling] at no charge. That was her wedding gift to us [chuckling]

I think we gave the priest ten dollars, and then we had a number of friends in at the Club Fortune, before Liberace started chasm' 'em out with his loud piano, at a breakfast. And we had [chuckling] to limit the number of people we'd invite, and we made a few enemies because we could afford only so many. They gave us a rate of seventy-five cents a person for the breakfast and that came out of our

budget. And the total train fare from Reno to Washington D.C. up to New York, up to Niagara and back into Pontiac, Michigan, I recall was two hundred and some odd dollars for both of us. And, once in Washington, we mooched off friends, so we wouldn't have any board or room to pay. We had a few friends back there, and would go out to dinner, and stayed with one couple we knew.

Pat McCarran offered to let us use his car, and I was scared to walk in Washington, let alone drive in it; so we'd let these friends drive us around to show us. [Chuckling]

When we went up to the Senate office building to see old Pat, he was very gracious and visited for an extended time. Pittman had already taken off; Congress was in recess. Scrugham was gone, so we had quite a visit with Pat, and saw a lot of Washington. It was the first time I saw one of these data processing units, one of the primitive ones in the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] offices, where they would kick out the cards; punch card system was what it was—far from computer programming.

We stayed several days in D.C., then on up to the New York World's Fair. [Laughing] We missed the one in San Francisco and saw the one in New York. And from there on up to Niagara Falls.

Amusing little story there, they hustled you to buy a ticket on the train, you were nearin' the falls and I think cost a dollar each, so for two dollars we got this bus ride. It took us all around the falls before we even went to the hotel—you would leave your baggage at the depot and this and that, so we bit; and we got in this old clunker bus. I remember goin' by the shredded wheat plant and climbin' hills, beautiful trees. I don't know, we traveled quite a ways and finally Niagara Falls came into sight and we were really thrilled. Well, we figured the tour was well worth the dollar, so as we went back to the depot, why then we had a little jitney and they took us to the hotel.

We had to get an inexpensive hotel, and it was called the Temperance House. And this jitney wheeled us around one way since we'd been the suckers on the bus, I guess a back way, and pulled us up in front of the Temperance Hotel, and we checked in and had reservations, very nice to us till we got cleaned up and I made the mistake of askin' if they had a bar (they didn't call them cocktail lounges in those days). I thought it was just some fancy English name or Canadian name Temperance House; I did not realize it was operated [chuckling] by the very thing it means! I won't say it was the Women's Christian Temperance Union, but believe me it was definitely one of those organizations; we almost got thrown out of the hotel for my one inquiry. So we asked what would be the best way, you know, to get a cab or how to walk to see the falls at night; and the nice lady says, "Well, why don't you walk?"

We said, "What!"

"Yes, you just go down to the end of this long block and then turn right and then down about two more blocks," she said, "you'll be there on the American side."

We were within walking distance of the falls that morning when we got off the train—took the bus tour [laughing] and realized we had been had! They did swing us over on the Canadian side on the bus; and that's about all you can say for it. But, heavens, all the time here we were within walking distance of the falls and didn't know it.

At Pontiac, we picked up a new automobile which had taken the greater part of our budget, which ran right around fourteen hundred dollars; the car was \$985. I'm talking about the wedding breakfast, the train fare, livin' off friends, few dollars spent at the New York fair, and two dollars on that bus to see the falls; and we took delivery on our own car. And one thing that always stuck in my mind, I saw a lot of silver dollars in Pontiac, Michigan, in this bar we went into. We went in to get a beer, and I wondered about the silver dollars. I sized up the place, the back room while no one was lookin'. Then I had silver dollars in my pocket; I had gone to a bank in McLean, Virginia to get some. Virginians didn't know they were down at the bank [chuckling]. I couldn't get twenty; I got seventeen at the time, but I still carried some silver dollars. The fella hinted around that they had some pretty good poker games going there; they had gambling in Michigan in 1939 [laughing]!

And, of course, pulling out of Pontiac, I did have a credit card for gasoline, couldn't buy food and everything on 'em as you can today; and that's when we really started to skimp. We were down—I know we had less than one hundred or sixty or seventy dollars, and we were starting out in Pontiac, Michigan for Hawthorne, Nevada. It was an interesting trip. We'd eat thirty-five cent dinners—

chicken dinners in Kansas—wherever we could find a real low-cut, low-priced deal, stayed at the old style hotels. I forget; there was one in Colby, Kansas.

We stayed at the Daniel Boone, I believe it was, in Columbia, Missouri, and then walked to see the old campus, the new campus. That was really a treat to see the two campuses at the University of Missouri. And we made somewhat of a practice of tryin' to get near a university. We saw University of Michigan; we drove through Ann Arbor to see that; we saw the University of Missouri; we saw, I guess it's Kansas State at—whichever one's in Manhattan, Kansas; we stopped went through that. We had a wonderful tour of the campus at Notre Dame [Indiana].

And there was an interesting story there; we drove up into visitor's parking and got out. And Pauline, my wife, was wearing slacks and one of the tour guides, a nice young lady stopped us and said, "Well, you're more than welcome to tour the campus, but the lady will have to have a dress on." Thirty-nine, Notre Dame, young gal workin' as a tour guide—imagine today how that would be [chuckling]!

Well, pulling out of there we went to Leadville [Colorado], where my mother and dad were married and where they were chased out of [chuckling] when they went to Goldfield, or rather my dad was—and that's a true statement during the [George] Pettibone reign, as they called it—for his labor union activity, had to get down the hill. We stayed at the Vendome; I think it cost us two dollars a night. We stayed two nights.

We went down through Colorado Springs and stayed one night. Then we headed up—we were practically broke now. And I remember that long drive across American Fork, Spanish Forks down in southern Utah. And I thought that Nevada had desert, but we saw a lot of it then We worked our way

up into Salt Lake City where my wife's sister was living and now we were down to less than five dollars. Well, board and room were no problem there, still had that credit card, so we headed out when we left there and headed for Elko. Pete Walters was on the desk at the Commercial Hotel, and we pulled in there. I had to go find my old friend Pete and tell him my financial plight. Pete and I had gone to kindergarten together in Goldfield, so I've known him all my life. And [chuckling] I told Pete if he—I said, "Don't even tell Newt about it." (Newt Crumley) I said, "Could you please advance [me] and mail me a bill in Hawthorne to pay for a room?" I said, "We just can't make that long trip to Reno, not from Salt Lake."

He says, "Oh hell! This one's on the house." He says, "You're on—." So Pete comped us for one night in a room at the [chuckling] Commercial, and we went and had one of those Basque dinners at one of the Basque places in Elko. They cost about seventy-five cents each then.

Gassed up the next day and then—let's see—we stopped in Winnemucca for lunch, and we were just down to the nubbin'. We got into Reno, saved again, my brother lived there then. We pulled in there, but I had to borrow five dollars; I think I was down to about a dollar and twenty cents in my pocket [chuckling] And we were beginning to worry already if that—good thing that the bill for those credit card charges would not be comin' in (the gasoline) until sometime next month [laughing]. It was beginnin' to worry me already. And we stayed the one night in Reno and then headed home. And that was the wind-up of a month's tour and, I say, our first trip east ever.

And we look back on it now, you know. If someone gave me fourteen thousand, said go do all that, buy an automobile and go here or

there—I'd be worried about gettin' back home. Things have actually changed that much.

PAULINE McCLOSKEY

My wife, Pauline, to whom I was married in 1939 was born in Los Mochis, Mexico. Her mother was a native of Madrid, Spain, family name of Apodaca whose parents had come from Madrid to Mexico. Father, as I understand it, was a teacher, I believe at the University of Mexico or one of the schools there. That's how he emigrated from Spain to Mexico. as an educator, and it was there in Los Mochis that Pauline's mother met her husband-to-be, Alfred M. Thompson, a native of New Jersey—East Orange, but as English, as the English on this side of the pond can be, definitely, so many characteristics had—.

And I'll just digress at that point to say—not a home town associate, but a person close to us that we know, who was born in Los Mochis also, is Edward Slavin, still living in Tonopah, the former postmaster whose father had been the county clerk and treasurer of Nye County. Mr. Slavin was also with one of the companies down there in that early period, and that's how Ed happened to become a product of Los Mochis.

I started in the very beginning where she was born, but I wanted to bring out that part because I might forget it or skip over it later on, about the fun we'd had over the question of citizenship. She came with her parents and an older brother, who was born in Los Mochis, to the United States in 1916. It was during one of the revolutions in Mexico. And these gringos, these Americanos and the mining companies they represented were on the wrong side of that revolution. And they had to get out of the country as fast as they could.

From San Francisco the family came directly to Mineral County because her father

had been in correspondence with people he'd met criss-crossing in the mining field and who were workin' in the general area of Luning then. They went briefly to Luning and then farther up the hill where most of the mining activity was, in the direction of Gabbs, to a camp called Calvada.

The family moved from Calvada to Luning and then to Hawthorne in 1918. Her father who was a skilled electrician doing high line, high voltage work, to inside wiring. After workin' for a couple of the smaller mines, he became a superintendent of the Mineral County Power System.

After Pauline, six more daughters were born to the union. I believe one in Calvada, one in Luning, and the remainder in Hawthorne, if I have it right. They are all alive today including her brother.

Her mother spoke no English when she came to Mineral County, oh, possibly a few words as we all do in some language. She taught herself English with the aid of her children, Pauline and Alfred. They would bring their school books home and speak to their mother in Spanish first and the mother speakin' in Spanish, back and forth, she learned with her children over the years, through the twenties, to where she became very fluent in English with a Spanish accent too, but could carry on remarkable conversations.

Pauline was able to attend the University of Nevada for a year and was able to take a teaching job on a temporary basis. I believe it was called the Ridell Act where they could teach for a year and maybe be renewed if they'd take summer school each year until they had acquired the equivalent of a normal certificate. And she taught one or two years, I don't recall this, out in Diamond Valley, Eureka County at the Jacobsen ranch where they taught the full eight grades in one room

school, and the only one she missed of the entire Jacobsen family, who had just finished the eighth grade and gone into high school in town, was Harold Jacobsen, now the mayor of Carson City.

So she had to continue her education at that time, always during the summer because she had to make enough to live on, helpin' her family and savin' enough money to get back even during the summer. She took courses at the University of Nevada, one year in Santa Barbara. She said she objected to some of their methods and their theories, and they debated phonics against sight-reading and went all through that back in those days. And because she did dispute and disagree with many of the theories, her grades were not too good which later on proved—didn't mean much anyhow, because the University of Nevada later disavowed all those credits that those students received at this particular school [laughing].

One of the finest schools she went to is at Greeley, Colorado, Greeley State Teachers College. She said they really had a wonderful staff. They knew how to teach teachers and how to develop. They didn't use the word "innovative" in those days, they just came up with new ideas or expanded on old ones. And she said that it really helped her.

In 1936 she started teaching in Hawthorne, and continued teaching until we were married in 1939. As you know, as late as 1939, the rule still was no married women teaching. It was an economic factor because there were too many girls tryin' to finish their education on the installment plan which so many had to do, and to make a livin' even if they'd finished college and qualified to be a teacher, there had to be some jobs for them.

And the general idea was that if a gal wanted to get married, fine, but let the old man support her and let these other young

girls comin' behind her have a chance to teach. And that was a rule rigidly followed in Hawthorne up until World War II when they had to then go beg some of the married women to come back and teach.

I have skipped over lightly the thing I recall when I first came to Hawthorne. I can truthfully say that if the girls in high school had been permitted to play basketball in the late twenties, '29, early thirties, as they are today in the United States, that Pauline probably would have been not only all-state but possibly an all-American basketball player.

Pauline and Katy Dondero (Katherine Dondero now with the MGM in Reno moving up from Las Vegas), were two of the finest girl forwards that I have ever seen. And as I say, either one or both of them would have been well near the top. In fact they were so good, that they did the impossible, they defeated the Fallon girls basketball team once Fallon came here to play. And you must remember that we didn't have that—the very first gymnasium in Hawthorne—till 1931 when these girls were in high school. Most of their beginning playing was outdoors on the tennis court. And any games that were played, if any school would come play—I think Smith Valley did once, the Tonopah girls did once, but they all thought it was ridiculous to have to play basketball outdoors. In the absence of a gymnasium you could do nothing else.

In fact, it kind of galls me at times because she didn't start playin' golf till two or three years after I tried to learn the damn game, and never home helpin' in the yard, and she said the hell with it and got herself a set of clubs and went out; wasn't very long till she was beatin' my pants off [chuckling], decided she liked the game, went on, and won the club championship. But that's just the nature of her, when she started on something like that she

became a perfectionist and hasn't changed much.

HOUSE BUILDING

That was an interesting sidelight because we were all set to go, decided that while there hadn't been a new house built in Hawthorne since the few that were started in 1929 and '30 when the Naval Depot was under construction, ready to go. And we had a lot, twenty-five by ninety feet. We'd paid twenty-five dollars for the lot on A Street. And so many people said, "Well, why don't you move on out to the garbage dumps and then you wouldn't have to haul it out? You're almost out there now." [Chuckling] We were way out in the boondocks (A Street), five blocks from where you and I are sitting, but that was the very edge of nowhere in those days [chuckling].

We were able to pick up this lot for twenty-five dollars because the 20-30 Club had owned it, and it was gettin' ready to fold or practically had folded and sold the building on the lot to the American Legion for a hall and it was moved down to Main Street and is still there. The building, incidentally, was a frame addition to the old frame elementary school that the 20-30 Club had purchased. So now we had the clear lot, even title clear, and all twenty-five dollars paid on it, but no way to get that other twenty-five hundred. I had to go to Goldfield and borrow from a friend. That's when we got under way and we moved into the house in '41, enjoyed it for a couple of years. In 1943 I was drafted.

MILITARY SERVICE

Shortly after I'd been bounced into Camp Roberts, Pauline drove down to keep me out of trouble, I guess, or help me get through

basic training, and she did. But it was back to work because I'm a fifty dollar a month private and very little, virtually nothing, coming from the newspaper because we couldn't get any help. And my partner and one employee were keepin' the paper alive while everybody else in Hawthorne was makin' a bundle of money, but not us. And so she worked at the Paso Robles Mercantile.

They received a hundred a month, six days a week, and the sixth day, Saturday, was till nine o'clock at night. And I often remarked; "Well, I don't go for too many of these radical union leaders, but if any place needs Larry Vail (he was then the militant leader of the Retail Clerks Association), they need him more in Paso Robles than they need him in San Francisco." It was terrible the way that these stores in those areas adjacent to Army camps took advantage of the gals. Even some of the men had a little time off moonlighting; they paid next to nothing, and it was really terrible.

But fortunately after she got acquainted, established, she was able to land a job with the government out at Camp Roberts, a GS-2. I think it paid \$1,220 or \$1,440, but it was five days a week instead of six and a few dollars more a month. That was with the gasoline rationing board.

One thing I remember most, I was always in trouble because I had my bunk right next to the rifle rack in the barracks. If you've ever seen a herd of stampeding cattle when the sergeant yelled, "Hit it!" or "Get (some of part of your-anatomy) out of here on the double!" Why they'd run for their rifles and hit my bunk, and it was in shambles. Then we were all out in the field somewhere. When I came back, a note was on the pillow or somewhere, report to the orderly room. I was gettin' gigged because of the sloppy shape of my bunk because it was bumped into by so

many. Those old wool blankets on the bunks had to be tightened with the hospital corners and all that stuff. And, oh we had to be letter perfect. And if a dime wouldn't bounce off it as the sergeant went by, why, you were in trouble. Why, mine, I don't think a rubber ball would have bounced off the thing, the shape it was in after it had been kicked around and particularly after noon break.

I was moaning about it to Pauline and she told me, "I've heard the fellas talkin'. Why don't you try this? Take two large safety pins and as you pull, get it real taut. Instead of just putting in the hospital corner that a bump will loosen up, take those two safety pins, put one in either side, where the sergeant won't see 'em, and then pin 'em to the mattress, not the pillow because it will pull forward." So, I got the safety pins and tried it.

Denver Dickerson who had the bunk next to me, "My God, where'd you get this system, Mac? What are you doin'?"

And I told him. "You're right next to me and you get bumped once in a while." I says, "Try it." So I got two more large safety pins from Pauline, and Denver used the system for a while. And this so bugged the sergeant, I know, and that one corporal could never figure how my bed would get kicked around and that he could still bounce a dime off the top blanket. But he got to snoopin' around one day, and he found the damn safety pins [chuckling]; and it cost me a weekend in the kitchen on KP duty, but it worked for about three weeks. I had no complaints, no gigs, no trouble. So I always say that Pauline and I went through basic training together, you know, tryin' to solve some of the problems of an average private.

But the best of all was after I had finished basic training and was a company clerk down at company level and got acquainted better around the camp, I began to use what you

might term Army political influence among your buddies, cronyism, what you call it. And there was an opening up on the hill for a typist, a male WAG, as we called 'em. They had shipped all the WACs overseas, and I'm still hangin' around there ineligible to go overseas.

I got up on the hill which is higher headquarters both literally and figuratively, in the 5-3 section. But I cut my hours from sixteen hours a day to eight hours and no less pay. I'm leading up to this point on it, that I was typing up a training plan, as they called 'em, for this big windy major about three years younger than myself, strutting around and cocky son of a gun, great big Texan. And he said his name was "Majah Bahm" (Barham), but always called himself Majah Bahm. And I'll never forget his name. And I typed up a lesson plan one day and took it upon myself to correct his misspelled words and rearrange some of his inaccurate grammatical construction, and in reading it over he recognized that it was not exactly the way he wrote it. And he came storming out from his office into the big room which was our typing center—demanding right away from the first sergeant, he says, "Just who in the hell typed this lesson plan for me?"

And Sergeant Gardner, kind of willy-nilly, looked up in the corner and caught my initial, and he says, "Corporal McCloskey did sir."

And the major came stormin' over and he says, "You typed this damn thing here?" And he held the paper under my nose. And I hadn't even gotten out of the chair. I said, "Yes sir."

"Damn it, don't you stand when you're addressing an officer?"

And so I got a little hot, and I said, "Well, if you move over, I'll get up." [Chuckling] Standin' right over me; he had to back up—. So he proceeded with a great chewing for the benefit of everybody else in the room,

just roaring because I'm really gettin' a royal chewing:

"No goddamn corporal is evah gonna tell me how to spell, how to write a sentence, you understand that?"

I said, "Yes sir," and I was thinkin' to myself, I don't think anyone ever could, he was too bullheaded to tell—But I didn't say it out loud.

"And don't you ever do this again" He went on with the usual chewin', throwin' his weight around, stormin' out; and the whole room of other non-coms in there just roaring at me, you know, havin' a treat time.

And I was really ticked off, and then I went home that evening, say home, lived off post. I was tellin' Pauline about Majah Bahm. She said, "Uh oh." She said, "That's the character," she says, "that just put in for some gas rationing stamps." She says, "You know his wife and two kids just went back to Texas and he used to ride the car pool."

And I says, "I guess he intends to do a little more traveling than he had when the family was here."

But when I told her how ornery and cocky he was and what he'd pulled in front of everyone, she grabbed hold of that application of his and put it at the bottom of the pile. For three straight days it went [chuckling] to the bottom of the pile. And he came in, and he was raisin' hell with that sergeant. By this time she'd slipped it by some other papers; they went through both. She says, "Well, it must have gone forward if it's not here." So the sergeant would go into Paso Robles. The ration board said they had not seen that one [chuckling]. Well, this went on for a week, and they couldn't find it. They had to make out another one.

The day before gas rationing went off, and they under oath, super secrecy, top secret, confidential and all, the girls knew that it

was going to go off either the next day or two days following—couldn't say a word. So when she found that out, she went and fished out Majah Bahm's application and sent it in to Paso Robles; it came back, and he had his full book of stamps one day before gas rationing went off! [Laughing] And I said, "I was in no position; I wasn't man enough to get back at that big mouthy Texan, but thanks to my wife, he had his water caught off and to this day he doesn't know why his stamp application didn't go through."

In other words, he talked a little bit too loud and too long that one day, and I say he'll never know why his application was delayed.

Returning to Hawthorne after the war, why, I had to start rebuilding the paper again. We reopened the house. She started makin' plans right away for a family, which we had learned might be a little difficult; and I don't want to dwell on this too much of the time, because—out of respect to my daughters. But we finally did get our first daughter in '47. That's Joan, now living in Hawthorne. And two years later, our second daughter, Jean, who now lives in Carson City, who has one daughter, Jennifer, our only grandchild.

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